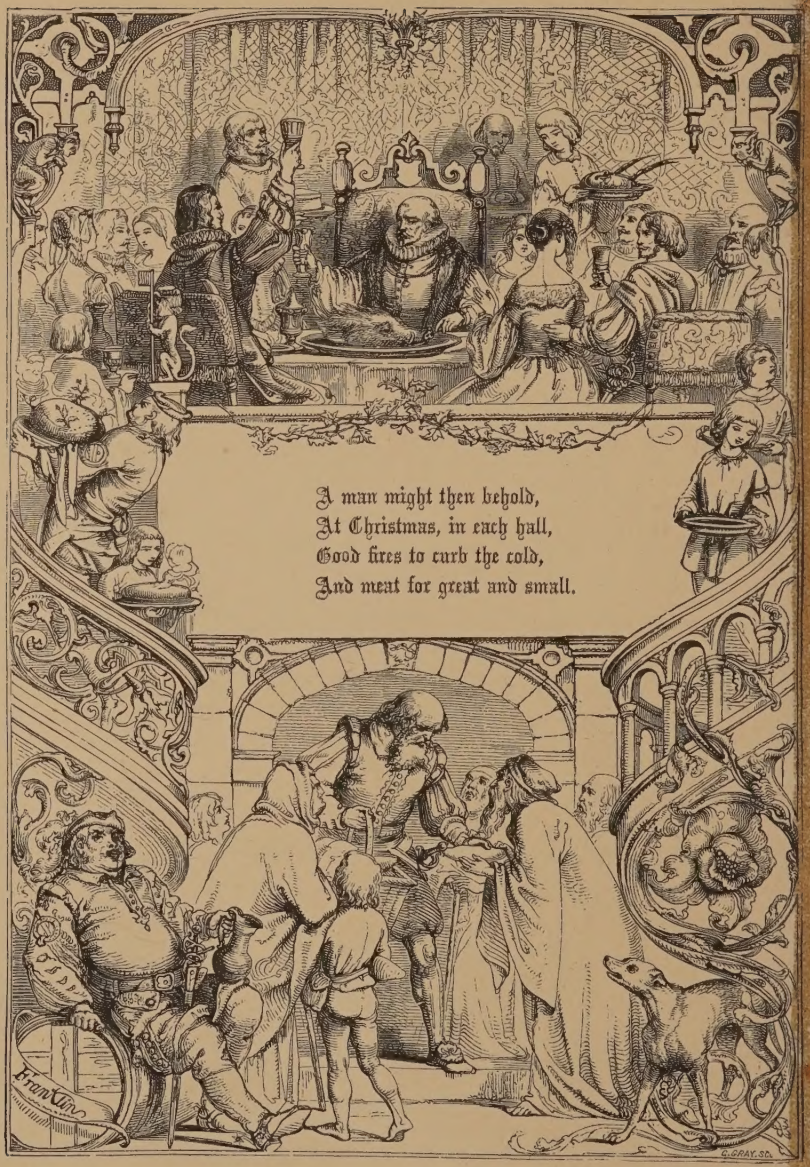
OLD ENGLISH BALLADS

1864

Stewart Auchenbach


A man might then behold,
At Christmas, in each hall,
Good fires to curb the cold,
And meat for great and small.
Franklin
E. GRAY. SC.

OLD

ENGLISH BALLADS.

A COLLECTION

OF

FAVOURITE BALLADS OF THE OLDEN TIME.

WITH FIFTY ILLUSTRATIONS BY BIRKET FOSTER, JOSEPH NASH, FREDERICK TAYLER, GEORGE THOMAS, JOHN ABSOLON, AND JOHN FRANKLIN.

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SIR LANCELOT DU LAKE.

This ballad first occurs in the "Garland of Good Will," and is attributed to Thomas Deloney, whose career as a song-writer extends from about 1586 to 1600. It is merely a rhymed version of a passage in the "Morte D'Arthur."

HEN Arthur first in court began,
And was approvèd king,
By force of arms great victories won,
And conquests home did bring!

Then into Britain straight he came,
Where fifty good and able
Knights then repairèd unto him,
Which were of the Round Table;

And many justs and tournaments
Before them there were drest,
Where valiant knights did then excel,
And far surmount the rest.

But one Sir Lancelot du Lake,
Who was approvèd well,
He in his fights and deeds of arms,
All others did excel.

When he had rested him a while,
To play, to game, and sport,
He thought he would go try himself,
In some adventurous sort.

He armèd rode in forest wide,
And met a damsel fair,
Who told him of adventures great,
Whereto he gave good ear.

"Why should I not?" quoth Lancelot then,
"For that cause I came hither."
"Thou seem'st," quoth she, "a goodly knight,
And I will bring thee thither

Whereas a mighty knight doth dwell,
That now is of great fame;
Therefore tell me what knight thou art,
And then what is your name."

"My name is Lancelot du Lake."
Quoth she, "it likes me than;*
Here dwells a knight that never was
O'ermatch'd with any man;

Who has in prison threescore knights
And four, that he has bound;
Knights of King Arthur's court they be,
And of his Table Round."

She brought him to a river side,
And also to a tree,
Whereon a copper bason hung,
His fellows' shields to see.

He struck so hard, the bason broke:
When Tarquin heard the sound,
He drove a horse before him straight,
Whereon a knight lay bound.

"Sir knight," then said Sir Lancelot,
"Bring me that horse-load hither,
And lay him down, and let him rest;
We'll try our force together.

And as I understand, thou hast,
So far as thou art able,
Done great despite and shame unto
The knights of the Round Table."

* then.

"If thou be of the Table Round"
(Quoth Tarquin, speedilye,)
"Both thee and all thy fellowship
I utterly defie."

"That's overmuch," quoth Lancelot tho;*
"Defend thee by and by."
They put their spurs unto their steeds,
And each at other fly.

They coucht their spears, and horses ran
As though there had been thunder;
And each struck them amidst the shield,
Wherewith they broke in sunder.

Their horses' backs brake under them,
The knights were both astound;
To void their horses they made great haste,
To light upon the ground.

They took them to their shields full fast,
Their swords they drew out than;
With mighty strokes most eagerly
Each one at other ran.

They wounded were, and bled full sore,
For breath they both did stand,
And leaning on their swords awhile,
Quoth Tarquin, "Hold thy hand,

And tell to me what I shall ask;"
"Say on," quoth Lancelot tho;
"Thou art," quoth Tarquin, "the best knight
That ever I did know;

And like a knight that I did hate;
So that thou be not he
I will deliver all the rest,
And eke accord with thee."

"That is well said," quoth Lancelot then;
"But sith it must be so,
What is the knight thou hatest thus?
I pray thee to me show."

* then.

"His name is Lancelot du Lake,
He slew my brother dear;
Him I suspect of all the rest;
I would I had him here."

"Thy wish thou hast, but yet unknown;
I am Lancelot du Lake!
Now knight of Arthur's Table Round,
King Ban's son of Benwake;

And I desire thee do thy worst."
"Ho! ho!" quoth Tarquin tho,
"One of us two shall end our lives,
Before that we do go.

If thou be Lancelot du Lake,
Then welcome shalt thou be;
Wherefore see thou thyself defend,
For now defie I thee."

They buckled then together so,
Like two wild boars rashing,
And with their swords and shields they ran
At one another slashing.

The ground besprinkled was with blood,
Tarquin began to faint;
For he gave back, and bore his shield
So low, he did repent.

This soon espied Sir Lancelot tho;
He leapt upon him then,
He pull'd him down upon his knee,
And rushèd off his helm.

And then he struck his neck in two;
And when he had done so,
From prison threescore knights and four
Lancelot delivered tho.

THE LEGEND OF SIR GUY.

"Published from an ancient MS. copy in the Editor's old folio volume, collated with two printed ones, one of which is in black-letter in the Pepys collection."—PERCY.

WAS ever knight for ladye's sake
Soe tost in love, as I, Sir Guy,
For Phelis fayre, that lady bright
As ever man beheld with eye?

She gave me leave myself to try,
The valiant knight with sheeld and speare,
Ere that her love she would grant me;
Which made mee venture far and neare.

Then proved I a baron bold,
In deeds of arms the doughtyest knight
That in those dayes in England was,
With sworde and speare in feild to fight.

An English man I was by birthe:
In faith of Christ a christyan true:
The wicked lawes of infidells
I sought by prowesse to subdue.

'Nine' hundred twenty yeere and odde
After our Saviour Christ his birth,
When King Athèlstone wore the crowne,
I lived heere upon the earth.

Sometime I was of Warwicke erle,
And, as I sayd, of very truth
A ladyes love did me constraine
To seeke strange ventures in my youth;

To win me fame by feates of armes
In strange and sundry heathen lands;
Where I atchieved for her sake
Right dangerous conquests with my hands.

For first I sayled to Normandye,
And there I stoutlye wan in fight
The emperours daughter of Almaine,
From manye a vallyant worthye knight.

Then passed I the seas to Greece,
To helpe the emperour in his right,
Against the mightye souldan's hoaste
Of puissant Persians for to fight:

Where I did slay of Sarazens,
And heathen pagans, manye a man;
And slew the souldan's cozen* deere,
Who had to name doughtye Coldràn.

Eskeldered, a famous knight,
To death likewise I did pursue:
And Elmayne, King of Tyre, alsoe,
Most terrible in fight to viewe.

I went into the souldan's hoast,
Being thither on embassage sent,
And brought his head awaye with mee;
I having slaine him in his tent.

There was a dragon in that land
Most fiercelye mett me by the waye,
As hee a lyon did pursue,
Which I myself did alsoe slay.

Then soon I past the seas from Greece,
And came to Pavye land aright;
Where I the duke of Pavye killed,
His hainous treason to requite.

* Sultan's cousin

To England then I came with speede,
To wedd faire Phelis, lady bright;
For love of whome I travelled farr
To try my manhood and my might.

But when I had espoused her,
I stayd with her but fortye dayes,
Ere that I left this ladye faire,
And went from her beyond the seas.

All cladd in gray, in pilgrim sort,
My voyage from her I did take
Unto the blessed Holy-Land,
For Jesus Christ my Saviours sake.

Where I Erle Jonas did redeeme,
And all his sonnes, which were fifteene,
Who with the cruell Sarazens
In prison for long time had beene.

I slew the gyant Amarant
In battel fiercelye hand to hand,
And doughty Barknard killed I,
A treacherous knight of Pavye land.

Then I to England came againe,
And here with Colbronde fell I fought;
An ugly gyant, which the Danes
Had for their champion hither brought.

And afterwards I offered upp
The use of weapons solemnlye
At Winchester, whereas I fought,
In sight of manye farr and nye.

But first neare Winsor, I did slaye
A boar of passing might and strength;
Whose like in England never was
For hugeness both in bredth and length.

Some of his bones in Warwicke yett
Within the castle there doth lye;
One of his sheeld-bones to this day
Hangs in the citye of Coventrye.

On Dunsmore heath I alsoe slewe
A monstrous wyld and cruell beast,
Call'd the Dun-cow of Dunsmore heath;
Which manye people had opprest.

Some of her bones in Warwicke yett
Still for a monument doth lye,
And there exposed to lookers viewe,
As wondrous strange, they may espye.

A dragon in Northumberland
I alsoe did in fight destroye,
Which did bothe man and beast oppresse,
And all the countrye sore annoye.

At length to Warwicke I did come,
Like pilgrim poore, and was not knowne ;
And there I lived a hermitt's life
A mile and more out of the towne.

Where with my hands I hewed a house
Out of a craggy rocke of stone,
And lived like a palmer poore
Within that cave myself alone :

And daylye came to begg my bread
Of Phelis att my castle gate ;
Not knowne unto my loved wiffe,
Who dailye mourned for her mate.

Till att the last I fell sore sicke,
Yea, sicke soe sore that I must dye ;
I sent to her a ring of golde,
By which shee knew me presentlye.

Then she repairing to the cave,
Before that I gave up the ghost,
Herself closd up my dying eyes ;
My Phelis faire, whom I lov'd most.

My body that endured this toyle,
Though now it be consumed to mould,
My statue, faire engraven in stone,
In Warwicke still you may behold.

THE CHILD OF ELLE.

"From a fragment in the Editor's folio MS. which, though extremely defective and mutilated, appeared to have so much merit, that it excited a strong desire to attempt the completion of the story. The reader will easily discover the supplemental stanzas by their inferiority, and at the same time be inclined to pardon it, when he considers how difficult it must be to imitate the affecting simplicity and artless beauties of the original."—PERCY.

ON yonder hill a castle standes,
With walles and towres bedight,
And yonder lives the Child of Elle,
A younge and comely knighte.

The Child of Elle to his garden wente,
And stood at his garden pale,
Whan, lo! he beheld fair Emmeline's page
Come trippinge downe the dale.

The Child of Elle he hyed him thence,
Ywis he stoode not stille,
And soone he mette faire Emmeline's page
Come climbing up the hille.

"Nowe Christe thee save, thou little foot-page,
Now Christe thee save and see!
Oh telle me how does thy ladye gaye,
And what may thy tydinges bee?"

"My lady shee is all woe-begone,
And the teares they falle from her eyne;
And aye she laments the deadlye feude
Betweene her house and thine.

"On yonder hill a castle standes."

And here shee sends thee a silken scarfe,
Bedewde with many a teare,
And biddes thee sometimes thinke on her,
Who loved thee so deare.

And here shee sends thee a ring of golde,
The last boone thou mayst have,
And biddes thee weare it for her sake,
Whan she is layde in grave.

For, ah! her gentle heart is broke,
And in grave soone must shee bee,
Sith her father hath chose her a new, new love,
And forbidde her to think of thee.

Her father hath brought her a carlish knight,
Sir John of the north countraye,
And within three dayes shee must him wedde,
Or he vowes he will her slaye."

Nowe hye thee backe, thou little foot-page,
And greet thy ladye from mee,
And telle her that I, her owne true love,
Will dye, or sette her free.

Nowe hye thee backe, thou little foot-page,
And let thy fair ladye know,
This night will I be at her bowre-windowe,
Betide me weale or woe."

The boye he tripped, the boye he ranne,
He neither stint ne stayd,
Untill he came to fair Emmeline's bowre,
When kneeling downe he sayd:

"O ladye, Ive been with thy own true love,
And he greets thee well by mee;
This night will he bee at thy bowre-windowe,
And dye or sette thee free."

Nowe daye was gone, and night was come,
And all were fast asleepe,
All save the ladye Emmeline,
Who sate in her bowre to weepe:

And soone shee heard her true loves voice
Lowe whispering at the walle:
"Awake, awake, my deare ladye,
Tis I, thy true love, call.

Awake, awake, my ladye deare,
Come, mount this faire palfraye:
This ladder of ropes will lette thee downe,
Ile carry thee hence awaye."

"Nowe nay, nowe nay, thou gentle knight,
Nowe nay, this may not bee;
For aye sould I tint* my maiden fame,
If alone I should wend with thee."

"O ladye, thou with a knight so true
Mayst safelye wend alone;
To my ladye mother I will thee bringe,
Where marriage shall make us one."

"My father he is a baron bolde,
Of lynage proude and hye;
And what would he saye if his daughter
Awaye with a knight should fly?

Ah! well I wot, he never would rest,
Nor his meate should doe him no goode,
Till he had slayne thee, Child of Elle,
And seene thy deare hearts bloode."

"O ladye, wert thou in thy saddle sette,
And a little space him fro,†
I would not care for thy cruel father,
Nor the worst that he could doe.

* lose. † from.

O ladye, wert thou in thy saddle sette,
And once without this walle,
I would not care for thy cruel father,
Nor the worst that might befalle."

Faire Emmeline sighed, faire Emmeline wept,
And aye her heart was woe:
At length he seizde her lilly-white hand,
And downe the ladder he drewe.

And thrice he claspde her to his breste,
And kist her tenderlie:
The teares that fell from her fair eyes,
Ranne like the fountayne free.

Hee mounted himselfe on his steede so talle,
And her on a faire palfraye,
And slung his bugle about his necke,
And roundlye they rode awaye.

All this beheard her owne damselle,
In her bed whereas shee ley;
Quoth shee, "My lord shall knowe of this,
Soe I shall have golde and fee."

"Awake, awake, thou baron bolde!
Awake, my noble dame!
Your daughter is fledde with the Childe of Elle,
To doe the deede of shame."

The baron he woke, the baron he rose,
And called his merrye men all:
"And come thou forth, Sir John the knighte;
The ladye is carried to thrall."

Fair Emmeline scant had ridden a mile,
A mile forth of the towne,
When she was aware of her father's men
Come galloping over the downe.

And foremost came the carlish knight,
Sir John of the north countraye:
"Nowe stop, nowe stop, thou false traitoure,
Nor carry that ladye awaye.

For she is come of hye lynage,
And was of a ladye borne,
And ill it beseems thee, a false churle's sonne,
To carrye her hence to scorne."

"Nowe loud thou lyest, Sir John the knight,
Nowe thou doest lye of mee;
A knight mee gott, and a ladye mee bore,
Soe never did none by thee.

But light nowe downe, my ladye faire,
Light downe, and hold my steed,
While I and this discourteous knighte
Doe trye this arduous deede.

But light now downe, my deare ladye,
Light downe, and hold my horse;
While I and this discourteous knight
Doe trye our valours force."

Fair Emmeline sighde, fair Emmeline wept,
And aye her heart was woe,
While twixt her love and the carlish knight,
Past many a baleful blowe.

The Child of Elle hee fought soe well,
As his weapon he wavde amaine,
That soone he had slaine the carlish knight,
And layde him upon the plaine.

And nowe the baron, and all his men
Full fast approached nye:
Ah! what may ladye Emmeline doe?
Twere now no boote to flye.

Her lover he put his horne to his mouth,
And blew both loud and shrill,
And soone he saw his owne merry men
Come ryding over the hill.

"Nowe hold thy hand, thou bold baron,
I pray thee, hold thy hand,
Nor ruthless rend two gentle hearts,
Fast knit in true loves band.

Thy daughter I have dearly lovde
Full long and many a day;
But with such a love as holy kirke
Hath freelye sayd wee may.

O give consent shee may be mine,
And blesse a faithfull paire;
My lands and livings are not small,
My house and lynage faire.

My mother she was an earles daughter,
And a noble knyght my sire——"
The baron he frownde, and turnde away
With mickle dole and ire.

Faire Emmeline sighde, faire Emmeline wept,
And did all tremblinge stand;
At lengthe she sprange upon her knee,
And held his lifted hand.

"Pardon, my lorde and father deare,
This faire yong knyght and mee:
Trust me, but for the carlish knyght,
I never had fled from thee.

Oft have you callde your Emmeline
Your darling and your joye;
O let not then your harsh resolves
Your Emmeline destroye.

The baron he stroakt his dark-brown cheeke,
And turnde his heade asyde,
To wipe awaye the starting teare,
He proudly strave to hyde.

In deepe revolving thought he stoode,
And musde a little space;
Then raisde faire Emmeline from the grounde,
With many a fond embrace.

"Here take her, Child of Elle," he sayd,
And gave her lillye hand;
"Here take my deare and only child,
And with her half my land.

Thy father once mine honour wrongde,
In dayes of youthful pride;
Do thou the injurye repayre
In fondnesse for thy bride.

And as thou love and hold her deare,
Heaven prosper thee and thine;
And nowe my blessing wend wi' thee,
My lovelye Emmeline."

ROBIN HOOD AND THE CURTALL FRYER.

"From an old black-letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood: corrected by a much earlier one in the Pepysian library, printed by H. Gosson, about the year 1610; compared with a later one in the same collection. The full title is: The famous battell betweene Robin Hood and the Curtall Fryer. To a new Northern tune."—RITSON.

N summer time, when leaves grow green,
And flowers are fresh and gay,
Robin Hood and his merry men
Were disposed to play.

Then some would leape, and some would runne,
And some would use artillery;
"Which of you can a good bow draw,
A good archer for to be?

Which of you can kill a bucke,
Or who can kill a doe?
Or who can kill a hart of greece
Five hundreth foot him fro?"

Will Scadlocke he kild a bucke,
And Midge he kild a doe,
And Little John kild a hart of greece,
Five hundreth foot him fro.

"Gods blessings on thy heart," said Robin Hood,
"That hath such a shot for me;
I would ride my horse a hundred miles,
To find one could match thee."

This caused Will Scadlocke to laugh,
He laught full heartily:
"There lives a curtall fryer in Fountaine's Abbey
Will beate both him and thee.

The curtall fryer in Fountaine's Abbey
Well can a strong bow draw;
He will beat you and your yeomèn,
Set them all on a row."

Robin Hood he tooke a solemne oath,
It was by Mary free,
That he would neither eate nor drinke
Till the fryer he did see.

Robin Hood put on his harnesse good,
On his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side,
And they became him weele.

He tooke his bow into his hand,
It was made of a trusty tree,
With a sheafe of arrowes at his belt,
And to Fountaine Dale went he.

And comming unto Fountaine Dale,
No farther would he ride;
There he was aware of the curtall fryer,
Walking by the water side.

The fryer had on a harnesse good,
On his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side,
And they became him weele.

Robin Hood lighted off his horse,
And tyed him to a thorne:
"Carry me over the water, thou curtall fryer,
Or else thy life's forlorne."

The fryer tooke Robin Hood on his backe,
Deepe water he did bestride.
And spake neither good word nor bad,
Till he came at the other side.

Lightly leapt Robin offe the fryer's backe;
The fryer said to him againe,
"Carry me over this water, thou fine fellow,
Or it shall breed thy paine."

Robin Hood took the fryer on his backe,
Deepe water he did bestride,
And spake neither good word nor bad,
Till he came at the other side.

Lightly leapt the fryer off Robin Hood's backe;
Robin Hood said to him againe,
"Carry me over this water, thou curtall fryer,
Or it shall breede thy pain."

The fryer took Robin on's backe againe,
And stept in to the knee;
Till he came at the middle streame,
Neither good nor bad spake he.

And comming to the middle streame,
There he threw Robin in;
"And chuse thee, chuse thee, fine fellow,
Whether thou wilt sink or swim."

Robin Hood swam to a bush of broome,
The fryer to a wigger* wand;
Bold Robin Hood is gone to shore,
And took his bow in his hand.

One of his best arrowes under his belt
To the fryer he let fly;
The curtall fryer with his steel buckler
Did put that arrow by.

"Shoot on, shoot on, thou fine fellow,
Shoot as thou hast begun,
If thou shoot here a summer's day,
Thy marke I will not shun."

* Willow.

Robin Hood shot passing well,
Till his arrows all were gane;
They tooke their swords and steele bucklers,
They fought with might and maine;

From ten o'th' clock that very day,
Till four i'th' afternoon;
Then Robin Hood came to his knees,
Of the fryer to beg a boone.

"A boone, a boone, thou curtall fryer,
I beg it on my knee:
Give me leave to set my horne to my mouth,
And to blow blasts three."

"That I will do," said the curtall fryer,
Of thy blasts I have no doubt;
I hope thou'lt blow so passing well,
Till both thy eyes fall out."

Robin Hood set his horne to his mouth,
He blew out blasts three;
Halfe a hundreth yeomen, with bowes bent,
Came raking over the lee.

"Whose men are these," said the fryer,
"That come so hastily?"
"These men are mine," said Robin Hood;
"Fryer, what is that to thee?"

"A boone, a boone," said the curtall fryer,
"The like I gave to thee;
Give me leave to set my fist to my mouth,
And to whute whues three."

"That will I doe," said Robin Hood;
"Or else I were to blame;
Three whues in a fryers fist
Would make me glad and faine."

The fryer set his fist to his mouth,
And whuted whues three;
Half a hundred good band-dogs
Came running over the lee.

"Here's for every man a dog,
And I myselfe for thee:"
"Nay, by my faith," said Robin Hood,
"Fryer, that may not be."

Two dogs at once to Robin Hood did goe,
The one behind, the other before;
Robin Hood's mantle of Lincolne greene
Off from his backe they tore.

And whether his men shot east or west,
Or they shot north or south,
The curtall dogs, so taught they were,
They kept the arrows in their mouth.

"Take up thy dogs," said Little John,
"Fryer, at my bidding be;"
"Whose man art thou," said the curtall fryer,
"Comes here to prate with me?"

"I am Little John, Robin Hood's man,
Fryer, I will not lie;
If thou take not up thy dogs soone,
I'le take up them and thee."

Little John had a bow in his hand,
He shot with might and main;
Soon halfe a score of the fryer's dogs
Lay dead upon the plain.

"Hold thy hand, good fellow," said the curtall fryer,
"Thy master and I will agree;
And we will have new orders taken,
With all the hast may be."

"If thou wilt forsake fair Fountaine's Dale,
And Fountaine's Abbey free,
Every Sunday throwout the yeere,
A noble shall be thy fee:

And every holliday through the yeere,
Changed shall thy garment be,
If thou wilt goe to faire Nottingham,
And there remaine with me."

The curtall fryer had kept Fountaine's Dale
Seven long yeeres and more;
There was neither knight, lord, nor earle,
Could make him yeeld before.

ROBIN HOOD AND GUY OF GISBORNE.

Printed by Percy from his famous manuscript. Gisborne is a market town in the west riding of the county of York, on the borders of Lancashire.

HEN shaws * be sheene, † and swards full fayre,
And leaves both large and longe,
Itt is merrye walkyng in the fayre forrèst
To heare the small birdes' songe.

The woodweele ‡ sang, and wold not cease,
Sitting upon the spraye,
Soe lowde, he wakened Robìn Hood,
In the greenwood where he lay.

"Now, by my faye," sayd jollye Robìn,
"A sweaven § I had this night;
I dreamt me of two wight yemèn,
That fast with me can fight.

Methought they did mee beate and binde,
And tooke my bowe mee froe;
Iff I be Robin alive in this lande,
Ile be wroken ** on them towe."

"Sweavens are swift, master," quoth John,
"As the wind that blowes ore a hill;
For iff itt be never so loude this night,
To-morrow itt may be still."

* Woods. † Shining. ‡ The thrush. § Dream. ** *Revenged.*

"Buske yee, bowne yee, my merry men all,
And John shall goe with mee,
For Ile goe seeke yond wight* yeomèn,
In greenwood where they bee."

Then they cast on their gownes of grene,
And tooke theyr bowes each one;
And they away to the greene forrèst
A shooting forth are gone;

Until they came to the merry greenwood,
Where they had gladdest bee;
There were they ware of a wight yeomàn,
His body leaned to a tree.

A sword and a dagger he wore by his side,
Of manye a man the bane;
And he was clad in his capull† hyde,
Topp and tayll and mayne.

"Stand you still, master," quoth Little John,
"Under this tree so grene,
And I will go to yond wight yeomàn,
To know what he doth meane."

"Ah! John, by me thou settest noe store,
And that I fairley finde:
How offt send I my men beffore,
And tarry my selfe behinde?

It is no cunning a knave to ken,
And a man but heare him speake;
And itt were not for bursting of my bowe,
John, I thy head wold breake."

As often wordes they breeden bale,‡
So they parted Robin and John;
And John is gone to Barnesdale;
The gates§ he knoweth eche one.

* Strong. † Horsehide. ‡ Mischief. § Ways.

But when he came to Barnesdale,
Great heavinesse there hee hadd,
For he found two of his owne fellòwes,
Were slaine both in a slade.*

And Scarlette he was flying a-foote
Fast over stocke and stone,
For the sheriffe with seven score men
Fast after him is gone.

"One shoote now I will shoote," quoth John,
"With Christ his might and mayne;
Ile make yond fellow that flyes soe fast,
To stopp he shall be fayne."

Then John bent up his long bende-bowe,
And fetteled† him to shoote:
The bowe was made of tender boughe,
And fell downe to his foote.

"Woe worth, woe worth thee, wicked wood,
That ere thou grew on a tree!
For now this day thou art my bale,
My boote when thou shold bee."

His shoote it was but loosely shott,
Yet flewe not the arrowe in vaine,
For itt mett one of the sheriffes men,
Good William a Trent was slaine.

It had bene better of William a Trent
To have bene abed with sorrowe,
Than to be that day in the greenwood slade
To meet with Little John's arrowe.

But as it is said, when men be mett
Fyve can doe more than three,
The sheriffe hath taken Little John,
And bound him fast to a tree.

* Glade. † Made ready.

"Thou shalt be drawen by dale and downe,
And hanged hye on a hill;"
"But thou mayst fayle of thy purpose," quoth John,
"If itt be Christ his will."

Lett us leave talking of Little John,
And thinke of Robin Hood.
How he is gone to the wight yeomàn,
Where under the leaves he stood.

"Good morrowe, good fellowe," sayd Robin so fayre,
"Good morrowe, good fellow," quoth he:
"Methinks by this bowe thou beares in thy hande,
A good archere thou sholdst bee."

"I am willefulle * of my waye," quo' the yemàn,
"And of my morning tyde:"
"Ile lead thee through the wood," sayd Robin,
"Good, fellow, Ile be thy guide."

"I seeke an outlawe," the stranger sayd,
"Men call him Robin Hood:
Rather Ild meet with that proud outlawe
Than fortye pound soe good."

"Now come with me, thou wight yemàn,
And Robin thou soone shalt see;
But first let us some pastime find
Under the greenwood tree.

First let us some masterye make
Among the woods so even;
We may chance to meet with Robin Hood
Here att some unsett † steven."

They cutt them downe two summer shroggs,‡
That grew both under a breere, §
And sett them threescore rood in twaine,
To shoote the prickes y-fere.**

* Missing. † Unexpectedly. ‡ Twigs. § Briar. ** Together.

"Leade on, good fellowe," quoth Robin Hood,
"Leade on, I do bidd thee;"
"Nay, by my faith, good fellowe," hee sayd,
"My leader thou shalt bee."

The first time Robin shot at the pricke,
He mist but an inch it fro;
The yeoman was an archer good,
But he cold never shoote soe.

The second shoote had the wighte yemàn,
He shote within the garlànde;
But Robin he shott far better than hee,
For he clave the good pricke-wande.

"A blessing upon thy heart," he sayd,
"Good fellowe, thy shooting is goode;
For an thy hart be as good as thy hand,
Thou wert better then Robin Hoode.

"Now tell me thy name, good fellowe," sayd he,
"Under the leaves of lyne*;"
"Nay, by my faith," quoth bolde Robin,
"Till thou have told me thine."

"I dwell by dale and downe," quoth hee,
"And Robin to take Ime sworne;
And when I am called by my right name,
I am Guye of good Gisbòrne."

"My dwelling is in this wood," sayes Robin,
"By thee I set right nought:
I am Robin Hood of Barnésdale,
Whom thou so long hast sought."

He that had nether beene kithe nor kin
Might have seene a full fayre fight,
To see how together these yeomen went
With blades both browne and bright:

* Lime.

To see how these yeomen together they fought
Two houres of a summer's day,
Yett neither Robin Hood nor sir Guy
Them fettled to flye away.

Robin was reachles * on a roote,
And stumbled at that tyde;
And Guy was quicke and nimble withall,
And hitt him ore the left side.

"Ah, deere Ladye," sayd Robin Hood tho,
"Thou art both mother and may;
I think it was never man's destinye
To die before his day."

Robin thought on our ladye deere,
And soone leapt up againe,
And strait he came with an awkwarde stroke,
And he sir Guy hath slayne.

He took sir Guy's head by the hayre,
And sticked itt on his bowe's end:
"Thou hast beene a traytor all thy liffe,
Which thing must have an end."

Robin pulled forth an Irish kniffe,
And nicked sir Guy in the face,
That he was never on woman born
Cold tell whose head it was.

Sayes, "Lye there, lye there now, sir Guye,
And with me be not wrothe;
Iff thou have had the worse strokes at my hand,
Thou shalt have the better clothe."

Robin did off his gowne of greene,
And on sir Guy did it throwe,
And hee put on that capull hyde,
That cladd him topp to toe.

* Careless.

"The bowe, the arrowes, and litle horne,
Now with me I will beare;
For I will away to Barnésdale,
To see how my men doe fare."

Robin Hood sett Guyes horne to his mouth,
And a loud blast in it did blow:
That beheard the sheriffe of Nottingham,
As he leaned under a lowe.*

"Hearken, hearken," sayd the sheriffe,
"I heare nowe tydings good,
For yonder I heare sir Guyes horne blowe,
And he hath slaine Robin Hoode.

"Yonder I heare sir Guyes horne blowe,
Itt blowes soe well in tyde,
And yonder comes that wight yeomàn,
Cladd in his capull hyde.

"Come hyther, come hyther, thou good sir Guy,
Aske what thou wilt of mee:"
"O I will none of thy gold," sayd Robin,
"Nor I will none of thy fee.

"But now I have slaine the master," he sayes,
"Let me goe strike the knave;
This is all the rewarde I aske,
Nor noe other will I have."

"Thou art a madman," said the sheriffe,
"Thou sholdest have had a knights fee;
But seeing thy asking hath beene soe bad,
Well granted it shale be."

When Litle John heard his master speake,
Well knewe he it was his steven;†
"Now shall I be looset," quoth Litle John,
"With Christ his might in heaven."

Fast Robin hee hyed him to Little John,
He thought to loose him belive:‡
The sheriffe and all his companye
Fast after him did drive.

* Little hill. † Voice. ‡ Immediately.

"Stand abacke, stand abacke," sayd Robin,
"Why draw you mee soe neere?
It was never the use in our countrye,
Ones shrift another shold heere."

But Robin pulled forth an Irysh knife,
And losed John hand and foote,
And gave him sir Guyes bow into his hand,
And bade it be his boote.

Then John he took Guyes bow in his hand,
His boltes and arrowes eche one:
When the sheriffe saw Little John bend his bow,
He fettled him to be gone.

Towards his house in Nottingham towne
He fled full fast away,
And soe did all the companye,
Not one behind wold stay.

But he cold neither runne soe fast,
Nor away soe fast cold ryde,
But Litle John with an arrowe soe broad
He shott him into the backe-syde.

ROBIN HOOD AND LITTLE JOHN.

Being an account of their first meeting, their fierce encounter, and conquest. To which is added, their friendly agreement; and how he came to be called Little John. To the tune of "Arthur a Bland."—RITSON.

HEN Robin Hood was about twenty years old,
With a hey down, down, and a down,
He happen'd to meet Little John,
A jolly brisk blade, right fit for the trade,
For he was a lusty young man.

Tho' he was call'd Little, his limbs they were large,
And his stature was seven foot high;
Where-ever he came, they quak'd at his name,
For soon he would make them to fly.

How they came acquainted, I'll tell you in brief,
If you will but listen awhile;
For this very jest, amongst all the rest,
I think it may cause you to smile.

Bold Robin Hood said to his Jolly bowmèn,
"Pray tarry you here in this grove;
And see that you all observe well my call,
While thorough the forest I rove.

"We have had no sport for these fourteen long days,
Therefore now abroad will I go;
Now should I be beat, and cannot retreat,
My horn I will presently blow."

Then did he shake hands with his merry men all,
And bid them at present good b'w'ye;
Then, as near a brook his journey he took,
A stranger he chanc'd to espy

They happen'd to meet on a long narrow bridge,
And neither of them would give way;
Quoth bold Robin Hood, and sturdily stood,
"I'll show you right Nottingham play."

With that from his quiver an arrow he drew,
A broad arrow with a goose-wing.
The stranger reply'd, "I'll liquor thy hide,
If thou offer'st to touch the string."

Quoth bold Robin Hood, "Thou dost prate like an ass,
For were I to bend but my bow,
I could send a dart quite thro' thy proud heart,
Before thou couldst strike me one blow."

"Thou talk'st like a coward," the stranger reply'd;
"Well arm'd with a long bow you stand,
To shoot at my breast, while I, I protest,
Have nought but my staff in my hand."

"The name of a coward," quoth Robin, "I scorn,
Wherefore my long bow I'll lay by;
And now, for thy sake, a staff will I take,
The truth of thy manhood to try."

Then Robin Hood stept to a thicket of trees,
And chose him a staff of ground oak;
Now this being done, away he did run
To the stranger, and merrily spoke:

"Lo! see my staff, it is lusty and tough,
Now here on the bridge we will play;
Whoever falls in, the other shall win
The battel, and so we'll away."

"With all my whole heart," the stranger reply'd;
"I scorn in the least to give out;"
This said, they fell to't without more dispute,
And their staffs they did flourish about.

And first Robin he gave the stranger a bang,
So hard that it made his bones ring:
The stranger he said, "This must be repaid,
I'll give you as good as you bring.

"So long as I'm able to handle my staff
To die in your debt, friend, I scorn:"
Then to it each goes, and follow'd their blows,
As if they had been threshing of corn.

The stranger gave Robin a crack on the crown,
Which caused the blood to appear;
Then Robin enrag'd, more fiercely engag'd,
And follow'd his blows more severe.

So thick and so fast did he lay it on him,
With a passionate fury and ire,
At every stroke he made him to smoke,
As if he had been all on fire.

O then into fury the stranger he grew,
And gave him a damnable look,
And with it a blow that laid him full low,
And tumbl'd him into the brook.

"I prithee, good fellow, O where art thou now?"
The stranger, in laughter, he cry'd.
Quoth bold Robin Hood, "Good faith, in the flood,
And floating along with the tide.

"I needs must acknowledge thou art a brave soul;
With thee I'll no longer contend;
For needs must I say, thou hast got the day,
Our battel shall be at an end."

Then unto the bank he did presently wade,
And pull'd himself out by a thorn;
Which done, at the last, he blow'd a loud blast
Straightway on his fine bugle-horn:

The eccho of which through the vallies did fly,
At which his stout bowmen appear'd,
All clothed in green, most gay to be seen,
So up to their master they steer'd.

"O what's the matter?" quoth William Stutely;
"Good master, you are wet to the skin."
"No matter," quoth he; "the lad which you see
In fighting hath tumbl'd me in."

"He shall not go scot-free," the others reply'd;
So strait they were seizing him there,
To duck him likewise; but Robin Hood cries,
"He is a stout fellow, forbear.

"There's no one shall wrong thee, friend, be not afraid;
These bowmen upon me do wait;
There's threescore and nine; if thou wilt be mine,
Thou shalt have my livery strait:

"And other accoutrements fit for a man;
Speak up, jolly blade, never fear.
I'll teach you also the use of the bow,
To shoot at the fat fallow-deer."

"O here is my hand," the stranger reply'd,
"I'll serve you with all my whole heart;
My name is John Little, a man of good mettle;
Ne'er doubt me, for I'll play my part."

"His name shall be alter'd," quoth William Stutely,
"And I will his godfather be;
Prepare then a feast, and none of the least,
For we will be merry," quoth he.

They presently fetch'd in a brace of fat does,
With humming strong liquor likewise;
They lov'd what was good; so, in the green-wood,
This pretty sweet babe they baptize.

He was, I must tell you, but seven foot high,
And, may be, an ell in the waste;
A pretty sweet lad; much feasting they had;
Bold Robin the christ'ning grac'd,

With all his bowmèn which stood in a ring,
And were of the Nottingham breed;
Brave Stuteley comes then, with seven yeomèn,
And did in this manner proceed.

"This infant was called John Little," quoth he;
"Which name shall be changed anon;
The words we'll transpose, so whereever he goes,
His name shall be call'd Little John."

They all with a shout made the elements ring,
So soon as the office was o'er;
To feasting they went, with true merriment,
And tippl'd strong liquor gillore.

Then Robin he took the pretty sweet babe,
And cloath'd him from top to the toe
In garments of green, most gay to be seen,
And gave him a curious long bow.

"Thou shalt be an archer as well as the best,
And range in the green-wood with us;
Where we'll not want gold nor silver, behold,
While bishops have ought in their purse.

"We live here like 'squires, or lords of renown,
Without e'er a foot of free land;
We feast on good cheer, with wine, ale, and beer,
And ev'ry thing at our command."

Then music and dancing did finish the day;
At length, when the sun waxed low,
Then all the whole train the grove did refrain,
And unto their caves they did go.

And so ever after, as long as he liv'd,
Altho' he was proper and tall,
Yet, nevertheless, the truth to express,
Still Little John they did him call.

ROBIN HOOD AND QUEEN KATHERINE.

"*From an old black-letter copy in a private collection compared with another in that of Anthony à Wood. The full title is: 'Renowned Robin Hood; or, his famous archery truly related in the worthy exploits he acted before queen Katherine, he being an outlaw man; and how he obtained his own and his fellows pardon. To a new tune.'*

"*It is scarcely worth observing that there was no queen consort named Katherine before Henry the Fifth's time: but as Henry the Eighth had no less than three wives so called, the name would be sufficiently familiar to our ballad-maker.*"—RITSON.

OLD tane from the kings harbengers,*
Downe, a downe, a downe,
As seldome hath beene seene,
Downe, a downe, a downe,
And carried by bold Robin Hood
For a present to the queen,
Downe, a downe, a downe.

"If that I live a yeare to an end,"
Thus can queene Katherine say,
"Bold Robin Hood, I will be thy friend,
And all thy yeomen gay."

The queene is to her chamber gone,
As fast as she can win;
She calls unto her lovely page,
His name was Richard Patrington.

"Come thou hither to mee, thou lovely page,
Come thou hither to mee;
For thou must post to Nottingham,
As fast as thou can dree.

* Harbingers.

"And as thou goest to Nottingham,
Search all the English wood,
Enquire of one good yeoman or another,
That can tell thee of Robin Hood."

Sometimes hee went, sometimes hee ran,
As fast as he could win;
And when hee came to Nottingham,
There hee took up his inne.

And when he came to Nottingham,
And had tooke up his inne,
He calls for a pottle of Rhenish wine,
And dranke a health to his queene.

There sate a yeoman by his side,
"Tell mee, sweet page," said hee,
"What is thy businesse and thy cause,
So far in the north countrey?"

"This is my businesse and the cause,
Sir, I'le tell it you for good,
To enquire of one good yeoman or another,
To tell mee of Robin Hood."

"I'le get my horse betimes in the morne,
By it be break of day,
And I will shew thee bold Robin Hood,
And all his yeomen gay."

When that he came at Robin Hoods place,
Hee fell down on his knee;
"Queen Katherine she doth greet you well,
She greets you well by mee;

"She bids you post to fair London court,
Not fearing any thing:
For there shall be a little sport,
And she hath sent you her ring."

Robin Hood tooke his mantle from his back,
It was of the Lincolne greene,
And sent it by this lovely page,
For a present unto the queene.

In summer time, when leaves grow green,
It was a seemly sight to see,
How Robin Hood himselfe had drest,
And all his yeomandry.

He clothed his men in Lincolne green,
And himselfe in scarlet red;
Blacke hats, white feathers, all alike,
Now bold Robin Hood is rid.

And when he came at Londons court,
Hee fell downe on his knee.
"Thou art welcome, Locksly," said the queen,
"And all thy good yeomandree."

The king is into Finsbury field,*
Marching in battle ray,
And after follows bold Robin Hood,
And all his yeomen gay.

"Come hither, Tepus," said the king,
"Bow-bearer after me;
Come measure me out with this line,
How long our mark must be.

"What is the wager?" said the queene,
"That must I now know here:"
"Three hundred tun of Rhenish wine,
Three hundred tun of beere;

"Three hundred of the fattest harts
That run on Dallom lee;
That's a princely wager," said the king,
"That needs must I tell thee."

* Now Finsbury Square, &c. in London, famous in old times for its archery ground.

With that bespake one Clifton then,
Full quickly and full soone;
"Measure no markes for us, most soveraigne liege,
Wee'l shoot at sun and moone."

"Ful fifteene score your marke shall be,
Ful fifteene score shall stand;"
"I'll lay my bow," said Clifton then,
"I'll cleave the willow wand."

With that the kings archers led about,
While it was three and none;
With that the ladies began to shout,
"Madam, your game is gone."

"A boone, a boone," queen Katherine cries,
"I crave it on my bare knee;
Is there any knight of your privy counsèl
Of queen Katherines part will be?

"Come hither to mee, sir Richard Lee,
Thou art a knight full good;
For I do knowe by thy pedigree
Thou sprung'st from Gowers blood.

"Come hither to me, thou bishop of Herefordshire,"
For a noble priest was hee;
"By my silver miter," said the Bishop then,
"Ile not bet one peny."

"The king hath archers of his own,
Full ready and full light,
And these be strangers every one,
No man knowes what they hight."

"What wilt thou bet," said Robin Hood,
"Thou seest our game the worst?"
"By my silver miter," then said the bishop,
"All the money within my purse."

"A boone, a boone," queen Katherine cries.

"What is in thy purse?" said Robin Hood,
"Throw it downe on the ground."
"Fiftren score nobles," said the bishop;
"It's neere an hundred pound."

Robin Hood took his bagge from his side,
And threw it downe on the greene;
William Scadlocke then went smiling away,
"I know who this money must win."

With that the kings archers led about,
While it was three and three;
With that the ladies gave a shout,
"Woodcock, beware thy knee!"

"It is three and three, now," said the king,
"The next three pays for all:"
Robin Hood went and whisper'd the queen,
"The kings part shall be but small."

Robin Hood hee led about,
Hee shot it under hand;
And Clifton, with a bearing arrow,
Hee clave the willow wand.

And little Midge, the millers son,
He shot not much the worse;
He shot within a finger of the prick:
"Now, bishop, beware thy purse!"

"A boone, a boone," queen Katherine cries,
"I crave it on my bare knee,
That you will angry be with none
That are of my partie."

"They shall have forty daies to come,
And forty daies to goe,
And three times forty to sport and play;
Then welcome friend or foe."

"Thou art welcome, Robin Hood," said the queene,
"And so is Little John,
And so is Midge, the millers son;
Thrice welcome every one."

"Is this Robin Hood?" now said the king;
"For it was told to me
That he was slain in the palace gates,
So far in the north country."

"Is this Robin Hood?" quoth the bishop then,
"As I see well to be:
Had I knowne it had been that bold outlàw,
I would not have bet one peny.

"Hee tooke me late one Saturday at night,
And bound mee fast to a tree,
And made mee sing a masse, God wot,
To him and his yeomandree."

"What an if I did?" saies Robin Hood,
"Of that masse I was faine;
"For recompence of that," he saies,
"Here's halfe thy gold againe."

"Now nay, now nay," saies Little John,
"Master, that shall not be;
We must give gifts to the kings officèrs;
That gold will serve thee and mee."

ROBIN HOOD AND ALLIN A DALE.

Or, a pleasant relation how a young gentleman, being in love with a young damsel, she was taken from him to be an old knights bride: and how Robin Hood, pittying the young mans case, took her from the old knight, when they were going to be marryed, and restored her to her own love again. To a pleasant northern tune, "Robin Hood in the green-wood stood."

Bold Robin Hood he did the young man right,
And took the damsel from the doting knight.

From an old black-letter copy in Major Pearson's collection.—RITSON.

COME listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you that love mirth for to hear,
And I will tell you of a bold outlàw
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,
All under the green-wood tree,
There he was aware of a brave young man,
As fine as fine might be.

The youngster was cloathed in scarlet red,
In scarlet fine and gay;
And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chanted a round-de-lay.

As Robin Hood next morning stood
Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did he espy the same young man,
Come drooping alonǵ the way.

The scarlet he wore the day before,
It was clean cast away;
And at every step he fetcht a sigh,
"Alack and a well a day!"

Then stepped forth brave Little John,
And Midge the millers son,
Which made the young man bend his bow,
When as he see them come.

"Stand off, stand off," the young man said,
"What is your will with me?"
"You must come before our master straight,
Under yon green-wood tree."

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin askt him courteously,
"O hast thou any money to spare
For my merry men and me?"

"I have no money," the young man said,
"But five shillings and a ring;
And that I have kept this seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.

"Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she soon from me was tane,
And chosen to be an old knights delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain."

"What is thy name?" then said Robin Hood,
"Come tell me, without any fail:"
"By the faith of my body," then said the young man,
"My name it is Allin a Dale."

"What wilt thou give me," said Robin Hood,
"In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true love again,
And deliver her unto thee?"

"I have no money," then quoth the young man,
"No ready gold nor fee,
But I will swear upon a book
Thy true servant for to be."

"How many miles is it to thy true love?
Come tell me without guile:"
"By the faith of my body," then said the young man,
"It is but five little mile."

Then Robin he hasted over the plain,
He did neither stint nor lin,
Until he came unto the church,
Where Allin should keep his wedding.

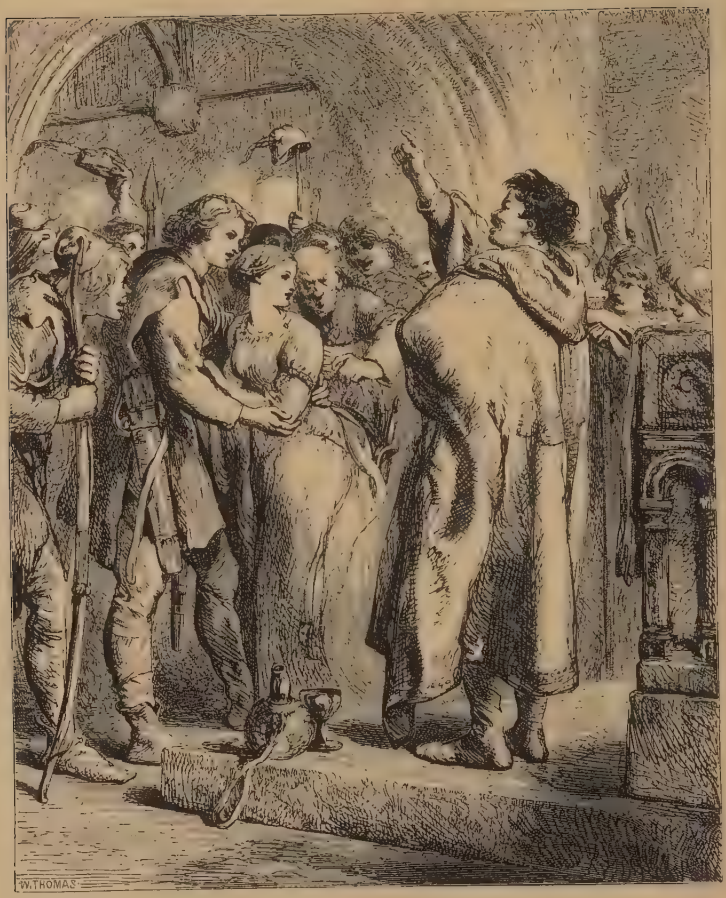
"What hast thou here?" the bishop then said,
"I prithee now tell unto me:
"I am a bold harper," quoth Robin Hood,
"And the best in the north country."

"O welcome, O welcome," the bishop he said,
"That musick best pleaseth me:"
"You shall have no musick," quoth Robin Hood,
"Till the bride and the bridegroom I see."

With that came in a wealthy knight,
Which was both grave and old,
And after him a finikin lass,
Did shine like the glistering gold.

"This is not a fit match," quod bold Robin Hood,
"That you do seem to make here,
For since we are come into the church,
The bride shall chuse her own dear."

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,
And blew blasts two or three;
When four and twenty bowmen bold
Came leaping over the lee.



And when they came into the church-yard,
Marching all in a row,
The first man was Allin a Dale,
To give bold Robin his bow.

"This is thy true love," Robin he said,
"Young Allin, as I hear say;
And you shall be married at this same time,
Before we depart away."

"That shall not be," the bishop he said,
"For thy word shall not stand;
They shall be three times askt in the church,
As the law is of our land."

Robin Hood pull'd off the bishops coat,
And put it upon Little John;
"By the faith of my body," then Robin said,
This cloth does make thee a man."

When Little John went into the quire,
The people began to laugh;
He askt them seven times in the church,
Lest three times should not be enough.

"Who gives me this maid?" said Little John;
Quoth Robin Hood, "That do I,
And he that takes her from Allin a Dale,
Full dearly he shall her buy."

And thus having ende of this merry wedding,
The bride lookt like a queen;
And so they return'd to the merry green-wood,
Amongst the leaves so green.

ADAM BELL, CLYM OF THE CLOUGHE, AND WYLLYAM OF CLOUDESLÈ.

This favourite old ballad was first printed by William Copland about the year 1550.

ERY it was in grene forest,
Amonge the leues grene,
Wher that men walke east and west,
With bowes and arrowes kene,

To ryse the dere out of theyr denne,—
Such sightes hath ofte bene sene,—
As by thre yemen of the north countrey,
By them it is I meane.

The one of them hight Adam Bel,
The other Clym of the Clough,*
The Thyrd was William of Cloudesly,
An archer good ynough.

They were outlawed for venyson,
These yemen everechone;
They swore them brethren upon a day,
To Englysshe-wood for to gone.

Now lith and lysten, gentylmen,
That of myrthes loveth to here:
Two of them were single men,
The third had a wedded fere.

* Clement of the valley.

Wyllyam was the wedded man,
Muche more then was hys care:
He sayde to hys brethren upon a day,
To Carelel* he would fare,

For to speke with fayre Alse hys wife,
And with hys chyldren thre.
"By my trouth," sayde Adam Bel,
"Not by the counsell of me.

"For if ye go to Caerlel, brother,
And from thys wylde wode wende,
If the justice mai you take,
Your lyfe were at an ende."

"If that I come not tomorrowe, brother,
By pryme to you agayne,
Truste not els but that I am take,
Or else that I am slayne."

He toke hys leave of his brethren two,
And to Carlel he is gon;
There he knocked at hys owne windowe,
Shortlye and anone.

"Where be you, fayre Alyce, my wyfe,
And my chyldren three?
Lyghtly let in thyne owne husbande,
Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

"Alas!" then sayde fayre Alyce,
And syghed wonderous sore,
"Thys place hath ben besette for you,
Thys half yere and more."

"Now am I here," sayde Cloudeslè,
"I woulde that I in were:—
Now feche us meate and drynke ynoughe,
And let us make good chere."

* Carlisle.

She fetched him meat and drynke plenty,
Lyke a true wedded wyfe,
And pleaséd hym wyth that she had,
Whome she loved as her lyfe.

There lay an old wyfe in that place,
A lytle besyde the fyre,
Whych Wyllyam had found, of cherytye,
More then seven yere.

Up she rose and walked full styll,
Evel mote she spede therefoore,
For she had not set no fote on ground
In seven yere before.

She went unto the justice hall,
As fast as she could hye;
"Thys nyght is come unto this town
Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

Thereof the iustice was full fayne,
And so was the shirife also;
"Thou shalt not travaile hether, dame, for nought,
Thy meed thou shalt have or thou go."

They gave to her a ryght good goune,
Of scarlat it was, as I heard sayne;
She toke the gyft and home she wente,
And couched her downe agayne.

They rysed the towne of mery Carlel,
In all the hast that they can,
And came thronging to Wyllyames house,
As fast as they myght gone.

Theyr they besette that good yeman,
Round about on every syde,
Wyllyam hearde great noyse of folkes,
That heytherward they hyed.

Alice opened a shot-wyndow,
And loked all about,
She was ware of the justice and shirife bothe,
Wyth a full great route.

"Alas! treason," cry'd Aleyce,
"Ever wo may thou be!
Go into my chambre, my husband," she sayd,
"Swete Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

He toke hys sweard and hys bucler,
Hys bow and hys chyldren thre,
And wente into hys strongest chamber,
Where he thought surest to be.

Fayre Alice folowed him as a lover true,
With a pollaxe in her hande;
"He shal be dead that here cometh in
Thys dore, whyle I may stand."

Cloudeslè bent a wel good bowe,
That was of trusty tre,
He smot the justise on the brest,
That hys arrowe brest in thre.

"God's curse on his hartt," saide William,
"Thys day thy cote dyd on;
If it had ben no better then myne,
It had gone nere thy bone."

"Yelde the, Cloudeslè," sayd the justise,
"And thy bowe and thy arrowes the fro:"
"Gods curse on hys hart," sayde fair Alice,
"That my husband councelleth so."

"Set fyre on the house," saide the sherife,
"Syth it wyll no better be,
And brenne we therin William," he saide,
"Hys wyfe and chyldren thre."

They fyred the house in many a place,
The fyre flew up on hye;
"Alas!" then cryed fayr Alice,
"I se we here shall dy."

William openyd hys backe wyndow,
That was in hys chambre on hye,
And wyth shetes let hys wyfe downe,
And hys chyldren thre.

"Have here my treasure," sayde William,
"My wyfe and my chyldren thre,
For Christes love do them no harme,
But wreke you all on me."

Wyllyam shot so wonderous well,
Tyll hys arrowes were all ygo,
And the fyre so fast upon hym fell,
That hys bowstryng brent in two.

The spercles brent* and fell hym on,
Good Wyllyam of Cloudeslè!
But than wax he a wofull man,
And sayde, "thys is a cowardes death to me.

"Leuer I had," sayde Wyllyam,
"With my sworde in the route to renne,
Then here among myne enemyes wode,
Thus cruelly to bren."

He toke hys sweard and hys buckler,
And among them all he ran;
Where the people were most in prece,
He smot downe many a man.

There myght no man stand hys stroke,
So fersly on them he ran;
Then they threw wyndowes and dores on him,
And so toke that good yemàn.

There they hym bounde both hande and fote,
And in depe dongeon hym cast;
"Now, Cloudeslè," sayd the hye justice,
"Thou shalt be hanged in hast."

* The sparkes burnt.

"One vow shal I make," sayd the sherife,
"A payre of newe galowes shall I for the make,
And the gates of Caerlel shal be shutte,
There shall no man come in therat.

"Then shall not helpe Clim of the Cloughe,
Nor yet shall Adam Bell,
Though they came with a thousand mo,
Nor all the devels in hell."

Early in the mornyng the justice uprose,
To the gates first gan he gon,
And commaundede to be shut full cloce
Lightilè everychone.

Then went he to the market place,
As fast as he coulde hye;
A payre of new gallous there did he up set,
Besyde the pyllory.

A lytle boy stod them amonge,
And asked what meaned that gallow tre;
They sayde, "to hange a good yeamàn,
Called Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

That lytle boye was the towne swyne-heard,
And kept fayre Alyce swyne,
Oft he had seene Cloudeslè in the wodde,
And geuen hym there to dyne.

He went out att a creves* in the wall,
And lightly to the wood dyd gone;
There met he with these wight yonge men,
Shortly and anone.

"Alas!" then sayde that lytle boye,
"Ye tary here all to longe;
Cloudeslè is taken and dampned to death,
As readye for to honge." †

* Crevice, † Hang.

"Alas!" then sayde good Adam Bell,
"That ever we see thys daye!
He myght here with us have dwelled,
So ofte as we dyd him praye!

"He myght have taryed in grene foreste,
Under the shadowes sheene,
And have kepte both hym and us in reaste,
Out of trouble and teene!"

Adam bent a ryght good bow,
A great hart sone had he slayne;
"Take that, chylde," he sayde, "to thy dynner,
And bryng me myne arrowe agayne."

"Now go we hence," sayed these wight yong men,
"Tary we no lenger here;
We shall hym borowe, by gods grace,
Though we bye it full dere."

To Caerlel went these good yemèn,
On a mery mornyng of Maye:
Here is a fyt of Cloudesli,
And another is for to saye.

[THE SECOND FIT.]

AND when they came to mery Caerlell,
In a fayre mornyng tyde,
They founde the gates shut them untyll,
Round about on every syde.

"Alas!" than sayd good Adam Bell,
"That ever we were made men!
These gates be shut so wonderly wel,
That we may not come here in."

Then spake him Clym of the Clough,
"Wyth a wyle we wyl us in bryng;
Let us saye we be messengers,
Streyght comen from our king."

Adam said, "I have a letter written wel,
Now let us wysely werke;
We wyl saye we have the kinges seale,
I holde the portter no clerke."

Then Adam Bell bete on the gate,
With strokes great and strong;
The porter herde suche noyse therat,
And to the gate faste he throng.

"Who is there nowe," sayde the porter,
"That maketh all thys knocking?
"We be tow messengers," sayd Clim of the Clough,
"Be comen streyght from our kyng."

"We haue a letter," sayd Adam Bel,
"To the justice we must it bryng;
Let us in, our messag to do,
That we were agayne to our kyng."

"Here commeth no man in," sayd the porter,
"By hym that dyed on a tre,
Tyll a false thefe be hanged,
Called Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

Then spake the good yeman Clym of the Clough,
And swore by Mary fre,
"And if that we stande long wythout,
Lyke a thefe hanged shalt thou be.

"Lo here we have the kynges seale;
What! lordeyne, art thou wode?" *
The porter went † it had ben so,
And lyghtly dyd of hys hode.

* Mad. † Thought.

"Welcome be my lordes seale," he saide,
"For that ye shall come in:"
He opened the gate full shortlye,
An evyl openyng for him.

"Now are we in," sayde Adam Bell,
"Thereof we are full faine,
But Christ knoweth that harowed hell,
How we shall com out agayne."

"Had we the keys," said Clim of the Clough,
"Ryght wel then shoulde we spede;
Then might we come out wel ynough,
When we se tyme and nede."

They called the porter to a counsell,
And wrange hys necke in two,
And caste him in a depe dongeòn,
And toke hys keys hym fro.

"Now am I porter," sayde Adam Bel,
'Se, brother, the keys haue we here;
The worst porter to merry Caerlel,
That ye had thys hundred yere.

"And now wyll we our bowes bend,
Into the towne wyll we go,
For to delyver our dere brother,
That lyveth in care and wo."

And thereupon they bent theyr bowes,
And loked theyr stringes were round;
The market place of mery Caerlel,
They beset in that stound.

And as they loked them besyde,
A paire of new galowes ther thei see,
And the justice with a quest of swerers,
That had judged Cloudeslè there hanged to be.

And Cloudeslè hymselfe lay redy in a carte,
Faste bounde both fote and hand,
And a stronge rop about hys necke,
All readye for to be hangde.

The justice called to him a ladde,
Cloudeslès clothes should he have,
To take the measure of that good yeman,
And therafter to make hys grave.

"I have seen as great a mearveile," said Cloudesli,
"As betwyene thys and pryme,
He that maketh thys grave for me,
Himselfe may lye therin."

"Thou speakest proudli," saide the justice,
"I shall thee hange with my hande:"
Full wel that herd hys brethren two,
There styll as they dyd stande.

Then Cloudeslè cast hys eyen asyde,
And saw hys two brethren stande,
At a corner of the market place,
With theyr good bows bent in ther hand.

"I se good comfort," sayd Cloudeslè,
"Yet hope I well to fare;
If I might haue my handes at wyll,
Ryght lytle wolde I care."

Then spake good Adam Bell,
To Clym of the Clough so free,
"Brother, se ye marke the justyce wel,
Lo yonder ye may him see.

"And at the shyrife shote I wyll,
Strongly with an arrowe kene;
A better shote in mery Caerlel
Thys seven yere was not sene."

They lowsed their arrowes both at once,
Of no man had they dread;
The one hyt the justice, the other the sheryfe,
That both theyr sides gan blede.

All men voyded, that them stode nye,
When the justice fell downe to the grounde,
And the sherife fell nyghe hym by,
Eyther had his deathes wounde.

All the citezens fast gan flye,
They durst no longer abyde;
Then lyghtly they loused Cloudeslè,
When he with ropes lay tyde.

Wyllyam sterte to an officer of the towne,
Hys axe out of hys hande he wronge,
On eche syde he smote them downe,
Hym thought he taryed all to long.

Wyllyam sayde to hys brethren two,
"Thys daye let us togyder lyve and dye;
If ever you have nede as I have now,
The same shall you fynde by me."

They shot so well in that tyde,
For theyr stringes were of silke full sure,
That they kept the stretes on every side:
That batayle dyd longe endure.

They fought together as brethren tru,
Lyke hardy men and bolde;
Many a man to the ground they thrue,
And many a herte made colde.

But when their arrowes were all gon,
Men preced * on them full fast;
They drew theyr swordes then anone,
And theyr bowes from them cast.

* Pressed.

They went lyghtlye on theyr way,
Wyth swordes and buclers round;
By that it was the myddes of the day,
They had made mani a wound.

There was many an out-horne in Caerlel blowen,
And the belles bacward did they ryng;
Many a woman sayd alas,
And many theyr hands dyd wryng.

The mayre of Caerlel forth com was,
And with hym a ful great route;
These thre yemen dred him full sore,
For of theyr lyues they stode in great doute.

The mayre came armed a full great pace,
With a pollaxe in hys hande;
Many a strong man with him was,
There in that stowre to stande.

The mayre smot at Cloudeslè with his bil,
Hys bucler he brust in two;
Full many a yeman with great yll,
"Alas, treason!" they cryed for wo.
"Kepe we the gates fast" they bad,
"That these traytours thereout not go."

But al for nought was that they wrought,
For so fast they downe were layde,
Tyll they all thre, that so manfulli fought,
Were gotten without at a braide.

"Have here your keys," sayd Adam Bel,
"Myne office I here forsake;
Yf you do by my councèll,
A new porter do ye make."

He threw the keys there at theyr heads,
And bad them evell to thryve,

And all that letteth any good yeman
To come and comfort hys wyfe.

Thus be these good yemen gon to the wod,
As lyght as lefe on lynde;
They lough and be mery in theyr mode,
Theyr ennemyes were ferre behynd.

When they came to Englyshe wode,
Under the trysty tre,
There they found bowes full good,
And arrowes full great plentye.

"So God me help," sayd Adam Bell,
And Clym of the Clough so fre,
"I would we were nowe in mery Caerlel,
Before that fayre meyny."

They set them downe and made good chere,
And eate and drank full well:
Here is a fet of these wyght yong men,
And another I shall you tell.

[THE THIRD FIT.]

As they sat in Englyshe-wood,
Under theyr trysty tre,
Them thought they herd a woman wepe,
But her they mought not se.

Sore then syghed the fayre Alyce,
And sayde, "Alas that ever I sawe this daye!
For now is my dere husband slayne,
Alas and wel a way!

"Myght I have spoken wyth hys dere brethren,
Or with eyther of them twayne,
To let them know what him befell
My hart were out of payne!"

Cloudeslè walked a lytle besyde,
And loked under the grenewood linde;
He was ware of hys wife and chyldren thre,
Full wo in hart and mynde.

"Welcome, wife," then sayde Wyllyam,
"Under this trysty tre;
I had wende yesterday, by swete saynt John,
Thou shulde me never have se."

"Now well is me," she sayde, "that ye be here,
My hart is out of wo:"
"Dame," he sayde, "be mery and glad,
And thank my brethren two."

"Hereof to speake," sayd Adam Bell,
"I-wis it is no bote;
The meat that we must supp withall
It runneth yet fast on fote."

Then went they down into a launde,*
These noble archares all thre,
Eche of them slew a hart of greece,
The best they could there se.

"Have here the best, Alyce my wife,"
Sayde Wyllyam of Cloudeslè,
"By cause ye so bouldly stod by me,
When I was slayne full nye."

Then went they to supper
Wyth suche meat as they had,
And thanked God of ther fortune;
They were both mery and glad

And when they had supped well,
Certayne without any leace,
Cloudeslè sayd, "We wyll to our kyng,
To get us a charter of peace.

* Lawn.

"Alyce shall be at sojournyng,
In a nunry here besyde;
My tow sonnes shall wyth her go,
And ther they shall abyde.

"Myne eldest son shall go wyth me,
For hym have I no care,
And he shall breng you worde agayn
How that we do fare."

Thus be these yemen to London gone,
As fast as they might hye,
Tyll they came to the kynges pallace,
Where they woulde nedes be.

And whan they came to the kynges courte,
Unto the pallace gate,
Of no man wold they aske no leave,
But boldly went in therat.

They preced prestly into the hall,
Of no man had they dreade;
The porter came after and dyd them call,
And with them began to chyde.

The ussher sayed, "Yemen, what wold ye haue?
I pray you tell me;
You myght thus make offycers shent:*
Good syrs, of whence be ye?"

"Syr, we be outlawes of the forest,
Certayne without any leace,
And hether we be come to our kyng,
To get us a charter of peace."

And whan they came before the kyng,
As it was the lawe of the lande,
They kneled downe without lettyng,
And eche held up his hand.

* Disgraced.

They sayed, "Lord, we beseche thee here,
That ye wyll graunt us grace,
For we haue slaine your fat falow deer,
In many a sondry place."

"What be your names?" then said our king,
"Anone that you tell me:
They sayd, "Adam Bel, Clim of the Clough,
And Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

"Be ye those theves," then sayd our kyng,
"That men have tolde of to me?
Here to god I make a vowe,
Ye shal be hanged al thre.

"Ye shal be dead without mercy,
As I am kynge of this lande."
He commanded his officers everichone
Fast on them to lay hand.

There they toke these good yemen,
And arested them all thre:
"So may I thryve," sayd Adam Bell,
"Thys game lyketh not me.

"But, good lorde, we beseche you now,
That you graunt vs grace,
Insomuche as we be to you comen,
Or els that we may fro you passe,

"With such weapons as we have here
Tyll we be out of your place;
And yf we lyve this hundreth yere,
We wyll aske you no grace."

"Ye speake proudly," sayd the kynge,
"Ye shall be hanged all thre;"
"That were great pitye," then sayd the quene,
"If any grace myght be.

"My lorde, whan I came fyrst into this lande,
To be your wedded wyfe,
The fyrst bowne that I wold aske,
Ye would graunt it me belyfe;

"And I asked never none tyll now,
Therefore, good lorde, graunte it me."
"Now aske it, madam," sayd the kynge,
"And graunted shall it be."

"Then, my good lord, I you beseche,
These yemen graunt ye me:"
"Madame, ye myght have asked a bowne
That shuld have ben worth them all thre;

"Ye myght have asked towres and town[es],
Parkes and forestes plenty."
"None so pleasaunt to mi pay," she said,
"Nor none so lefe* to me."

"Madame, sith it is your desyre,
Your askyng graunted shal be;
But I had lever have geven you
Good market townes thre."

The quene was a glad woman,
And sayd, "Lord, gramarcy;
I dare undertake for them,
That true men shal they be.

"But, good lord, speke som mery word,
That comfort they may se."
"I graunt you grace," then said our king,
"Wasshe, felos, and to meate go ye."

They had not setten but a whyle,
Certayne without lesynge,†
There came messengers out of the north,
With letters to our kynge.

And whan they came before the kynge,
They kneled downe vpon theyr kne,
And sayd, "Lord, your offycers grete you wel,
Of Caerlel in the north cuntrè."

* Dear. † Lying.

"How fares my justice," sayd the kyng,
"And my sherife also?"
"Syr, they be slayne, without leasynge,
And many an officer mo."

"Who hath them slayne?" sayd the kyng,
"Anone thou tell me:"
"Adam Bel, and Clime of the Clough,
And Wyllyam of Cloudeslè."

"Alas for rewth!" then sayd our kynge,
"My hart is wonderous sore;
I had leuer than a thousand pounde,
I had knowne of thys before.

"For I have graunted them grace,
And that forthynketh me,
But had I knowne all thys before,
They had been hanged all thre."

The kyng opened the letter anone,
Hymselfe he red it thro,
And founde how these thre outlawes had slaine
Thre hundred men and mo.

Fyrst the justice and the sheryfe,
And the mayre of Caerlel towne;
Of all the constables and catchipolles
Alyve were left not one.

The baylyes and the bedyls both,
And the sergeauntes of the law,
And forty fosters of the fee,*
These outlawes had yslaw,

And broke his parks, and slaine his dere
Over all they chose the best;
So perelous outlawes as they were,
Walked not by easte nor west.

*King's foresters.

When the kynge this letter had red,
In hys harte he syghed sore;
"Take vp the table anone," he bad,
"For I may eate no more."

The kyng called hys best archars,
To the buttes with hym to go!
"I wylle se these felowes shote," he sayd,
"In the north have wrought this wo."

The kynges bowmen buske them blyve,*
And the quenes archers also,
So dyd these thre wyght yemèn,
Wyth them they thought to go.

There twyse or thryse they shote about,
For to assay theyr hande;
There was no shote these yemen shot,
That any prycke might them stand.

Then spake Wyllyam of Cloudeslè,
"By him that for me dyed,
I hold hym never no good archar
That shuteth at buttes so wyde."

"Wherat?" then sayd our kyng,
"I pray thee tell me:"
"At such a but, syr," he sayd,
"As men use in my countree."

Wyllyam went into a fyeld,
And his two brethren with him,
There they set vp two hasell roddes,
Twenty score paces betwene.

"I hold him an archar," said Cloudeslè,
"That yonder wande cleveth in two:"
"Here is none suche," sayd the kyng,
"Nor none that can so do."

* Immediately.

"I shall assaye, syr," sayd Cloudeslè,
"Or that I farther go:"
Cloudeslè, with a bearyng arow,
Clave the wand in two.

"Thou art the best archer," then said the king,
"Forsothe that ever I se:"
"And yet for your love," said Wylliam,
I wyll do more maystry.

"I have a sonne is seven yere olde,
He is to me full deare;
I wyll hym tye to a stake,
All shall se that be here;

"And lay an apple upon hys head,
And go syxe score paces hym fro,
And I myselfe, with a brode arow,
Shall cleve the apple in two."

"Now haste the," then sayd the kyng,
"By him that dyed on a tre;
But yf thou do not as thou hast sayde,
Hanged shalt thou be.

"And thou touche his head or gowne,
In syght that men may se,
By all the sayntes that be in heaven,
I shall hange you all thre."

"That I have promised," said William,
"I wyl it never forsake;"
And there even before the kynge,
In the earth he droue a stake,

And bound therto his eldest sonne,
And bad hym stande styll therat,
And turned the childes face fro him,
Because he shuld not sterte.

An apple upon his head he set,
And then his bowe he bent;
Syxe score paces they were out met,
And thether Cloudeslè went.

There he drew out a fayr brode arrowe,
Hys bowe was great and longe,
He set that arrowe in his bowe,
That was both styffe and stronge.

He prayed the people that was there,
That they would styll stande,
"For he that shooteth for such a wager,
Behoveth a stedfast hand."

Muche people prayed for Cloudeslè,
That hys lyfe saved myght be,
And whan he made hym redy to shote,
There was many a weping eye.

Thus Cloudeslè clefte the apple in two,
That many a man myght se;
"Over gods forbode," sayde the kynge,
"That thou shote at me!

"I geve the xviii. pence a day,
And my bowe shalt thou beare,
And over all the north countre,
I make the chyfe rydere."

"And I geve the xvii. pence a day," said the quene,
"By god and by my fay;
Come feche thy payment when thou wylt,
No man shall say the nay.

"Wyllyam, I make the a gentelman,
Of clothyng and of fe,
And thi two brethren yemen of my chambre,
For they are so semely to se."

"Your sonne, for he is tendre of age,
Of my wyne-seller he shall be,
And whan he commeth to mannes estate,
Better avaunced shall he be.

"And Wylliam, bring me your wife," said the quene,
Me longeth her sore to se;
She shal be my chefe gentelwoman,
To governe my nursery."

The yemen thanketh them full curteously,
And sayd, "To some bysshop wyl we wend,
Of all the synnes that we have done
To be assoyld at his hand."

So forth be gone these good yemen,
As fast as they myght hye,
And after came and dwelled with the kynge,
And dyed good men all thre.

Thus endeth the lives of these good yemen,
God send them eternall blysse,
And all that with hande bowe shoteth,
That of heaven may never mysse!

CHEVY-CHACE.

"In this . . . year, 1436, *according to Hector Boethius, was fought the battle of Pepperden, not far from the Cheviot Hills, between the Earl of Northumberland* [*IId Earl, son of Hotspur*], *and Earl William Douglas, of Angus, with a small army of about four thousand men each, in which the latter had the advantage. As this seems to have been a private conflict between these two great Chieftains of the Borders, rather than a national war, it has been thought to have given rise to the celebrated ola ballad of Chevy-Chase; which, to render it more pathetic and interesting, has been heightened with tragical incidents wholly fictitious."*

OD prosper long our noble king,
Our lives and safeties all;
A woful hunting once there did
In Chevy-Chace befall.

To drive the deer with hound and horn,
Erle Piercy took his way;
The child may rue that is unborn,
The hunting of that day.

The stout Earl of Northumberland
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods
Three summer's days to take;

The chiefest harts in Chevy-Chace
To kill and bear away:
The tidings to Earl Douglas came,
In Scotland where he lay.

Who sent Earl Piercy present word,
He would prevent his sport;
The English earl not fearing this,
Did to the woods resort,

With fifteen hundred bow-men bold,
All chosen men of might,
Who knew full well in time of need
To aim their shafts aright.

The gallant greyhounds swiftly ran,
To chase the fallow deer;
On Monday they began to hunt,
When day-light did appear.

And long before high noon they had
An hundred fat bucks slain;
Then having din'd, the drovers went
To rouze them up again.

The bow-men muster'd on the hills,
Well able to endure;
Their backsides all, with special care,
That day were guarded sure.

The hounds ran swiftly thro' the woods,
The nimble deer to take,
And with their cries the hills and dales
An eccho shrill did make.

Lord Piercy to the quarry went,
To view the tender deere;
Quoth he, "Earl Douglas promised
This day to meet me heer.

"If that I thought he would not come,
No longer would I stay."
With that, a brave young gentleman
Thus to the Earl did say:

"Lo, yonder doth Earl Douglas come,
His men in armour bright;
Full twenty hundred Scottish spears,
All marching in our sight.

"All men of pleasant Tividale,
Fast by the river Tweed:"
"Then cease your sport," Erle Piercy said,
"And take your bows with speed.

"And now with me, my countrymen,
Your courage forth advance;
For there was never champion yet
In Scotland or in France,

"That ever did on horseback come,
But, if my hap it were,
I durst encounter man for man,
With him to break a spear."

Earl Douglas on his milk-white steed,
Most like a baron bold,
Rode foremost of the company,
Whose armour shone like gold.

"Show me," he said, "whose men you be,
That hunt so boldly here,
That, without my consent, do chase
And kill my fallow-deer."

The man that first did answer make
Was noble Piercy he;
Who said, "We list not to declare,
Nor show whose men we be.

"Yet we will spend our dearest blood,
Thy chiefest hart to slay;"
Then Douglas swore a solemn oath,
And thus in rage did say;

"Ere thus I will out-braved be,
One of us two shall dye:
I know thee well, an earl thou art;
Lord Piercy, so am I.

"But trust me, Piercy, pity it were,
And great offence, to kill
Any of these our harmless men,
For they have done no ill.

"Let thou and I the battel try,
And set our men aside:
"Accurs'd be he," Lord Piercy said,
"By whom this is deny'd."

Then stept a gallant squire forth,
(Witherington was his name)
Who said, "I would not have it told
To Henry our king for shame,

"That ere my captaine fought on foot,
And I stood looking on:
You be two earls," said Witherington,
"And I a squire alone.

"I'll do the best that do I may,
While I have power to stand;
While I have power to wield my sword,
I'll fight with heart and hand."

Our English archers bent their bows,
Their hearts were good and true;
At the first flight of arrows sent,
Full three score Scots they slew.

To drive the deer with hound and horn,
Earl Douglas had the bent;
A captain mov'd with mickle pride
The spears to shivers sent.

They clos'd full fast on every side,
No slacknes there was found;
And many a gallant gentleman
Lay gasping on the ground.

O Christ! it was a grief to see,
And likewise for to hear,
The cries of men lying in their gore,
And scatter'd here and there.

At last these two stout earls did meet,
Like captains of great might;
Like lions mov'd they laid on load,
And made a cruel fight.

They fought until they both did sweat,
With swords of temper'd steel;
Until the blood, like drops of rain,
They trickling down did feel.

"Yield thee, Lord Piercy," Douglas said;
"In faith I will thee bring,
Where thou shalt high advanced be
By James, our Scottish king.

"Thy ransom I will freely give,
And thus report of thee,
Thou art the most couragious knight
That ever I did see.

"No, Douglas," quoth Earl Piercy then,
"Thy proffer I do scorn;
I will not yield to any Scot
That ever yet was born."

With that, there came an arrow keen
Out of an English bow,
Which struck Earl Douglas to the heart,
A deep and deadly blow:

Who never spoke more words than these,
"Fight on, my merry men all;
For why, my life is at an end,
Lord Piercy sees my fall."

Then leaving life, Earl Piercy took
The dead man by the hand;
And said, "Earl Douglas, for thy life
Would I had lost my land!

"O Christ! my very heart doth bleed
With sorrow for thy sake;
For sure, a more renowned knight
Mischance did never take."

A knight amongst the Scots there was,
Which saw Earl Douglas dye,
Who straight in wrath did vow revenge
Upon the Earl Piercy.

Sir Hugh Montgomery was he call'd,
Who, with a spear most bright,
Well-mounted on a gallant steed,
Ran fiercely thro' the fight;

And pass'd the English archers all,
Without all dread or fear,
And through Earl Piercy's body then
He thrust his hateful spear.

With such a veh'ment force and might
He did his body gore,
The spear ran through the other side
A large cloth-yard, and more.

So thus did both these nobles dye,
Whose courage none could stain;
An English archer then perceiv'd
The noble earl was slain.

He had a bow bent in his hand,
Made of a trusty tree;
An arrow of a cloth-yard long
Up to the head drew he.

Against Sir Hugh Montgomery
So right his shaft he set,
The grey goose-wing that was thereon
In his heart's blood was wet.

This fight did last from break of day
Till setting of the sun;
For when they rung the evening-bell,
The battel scarce was done.

With the Earl Piercy, there was slain,
Sir John of Ogerton,
Sir Robert Ratcliff, and Sir John,
Sir James, that bold baron.

And with Sir George and good Sir James,
Both knights of good account,
Good Sir Ralph Rabby there was slain,
Whose prowess did surmount.

For Witherington needs must I wail,
As one in doleful dumps;
For when his legs were smitten off,
He fought upon his stumps.

And with Earl Douglas, there was slain
Sir Hugh Montgomery,
Sir Charles Currel, that from the field
One foot would never fly.

Sir Charles Murrel, of Ratcliff, too,
His sister's son was he;
Sir David Lamb, so well esteem'd,
Yet saved could not bee.

And the Lord Maxwell in like wise
Did with Earl Douglas dye;
Of twenty hundred Scottish spears
Scarce fifty-five did fly.

Of fifteen hundred Englishmen,
Went home but fifty-three;
The rest were slain in Chevy-Chace,
Under the green-wood tree.

Next day did many widows come,
Their husbands to bewail;
They wash'd their wounds in brinish tears,
But all would not prevail.

Their bodies, bath'd in purple blood,
They bore with them away:
They kiss'd them dead a thousand times,
When they were clad in clay.

This news was brought to Edinburgh,
Where Scotland's king did reign,
That brave Earl Douglas suddenly
Was with an arrow slain.

"O heavy news," King James did say;
"Scotland can witness be,
I have not any captain more
Of such account as he."

Like tidings to King Henry came,
Within as short a space,
That Piercy of Northumberland
Was slaine in Chevy-Chace.

"Now God be with him," said our king,
"Sith 't will no better be;
I trust I have within my realm
Five hundred as good as he.

"Yet shall not Scot nor Scotland say,
But I will vengeance take,
And be revenged on them all,
For brave Earl Piercy's sake."

This vow full well the king perform'd
After, on Humbledown;
In one day, fifty knights were slain,
With lords of great renown.

And of the rest, of small account,
Did many thousands dye:
Thus endeth the hunting of Chevy-Chace,
Made by the Earl Piercy.

God save the king, and bless the land
In plenty, joy, and peace;
And grant henceforth, that foul debate
'Twixt noblemen may cease.

EDOM O' GORDON.

From Ritson's "Scottish Songs."

T fell about the Martinmas,
Quhen the wind blew schrile and cauld,
Said Edom o' Gordon to his men,
"We maun draw to a hauld.

"And what an a hauld sall we draw to,
My merry men and me?
We will gae to the house of the Rodes,
To see that fair ladie."

She had nae sooner busket hersell,
Nor putten on her gown,
Till Edom o' Gordon and his men
Were round about the town.

They had nae sooner sitten down,
Nor sooner said the grace,
Till Edom o' Gordon and his men
Were closed about the place.

The lady ran up to her tower head,
As fast as she could drie,
To see if by her fair speeches,
She could with him agree.

As soon as he saw the lady fair,
And hir yates * all locked fast,
He fell into a rage of wrath,
And his heart was aghast.

"Cum down to me, ze lady fair,
Cum down to me, let's see;
This night ze's ly by my ain side,
The morn my bride sall be."

* Gates.

"I winnae cum down, ye fals Gordon,
I winnae cum down to thee;
I winnae forsake my ane dear lord
That is sae far frae me."

"Gi up your house, ze fair lady,
Gi up your house to me,
Or I will burn zoursel therein,
Bot you and zour babies three."

"I winna gie up, zou fals Gordon,
To nae sik traitor as thee,
Tho' zou should burn mysel therein,
Bot and my babies three."

"Set fire to the house," quoth fals Gordon,
"Sin better may nae bee;
And I will burn hersel therein,
Bot and her babies three."

"And ein wae worth ze, Jock my man,
I paid ze weil zour fee;
Why pow* ze out my ground wa' stane,
Lets in the reek to me?

"And ein wae worth ze, Jock my man,
For I paid zou weil zour hire;
Why pow ze out my ground wa' stane,
To me lets in the fire?"

"Ye paid me weil my hire, lady,
Ye paid me weil my fee,
But now I'm Edom of Gordon's man,
Maun either do or die."

O then bespake her zoungest son,
Sat on the nurses knee,
"Dear mother, gie owre your house," he says,
"For the reek it worries me."

* Pull ye out.

"I winnae gie up my house, my dear,
To nae sik traitor as he;
Cum well, cum wae, my jewels fair,
Ye maun tak share wi me."

O then bespake her dochter dear,
She was baith jimp and sma,
"O row me in a pair o' shiets,
And tow me owre the wa."

They rowd her in a pair of shiets,
And towd her owre the wa,
But, on the point of Edom's speir,
She gat a deadly fa.'

"O bonny, bonny, was hir mouth,
And chirry were her cheiks,
And clear, clear was hir zellow hair,
Whereon the reid bluid dreips.

Then wi his speir he turn'd hir owr,
O gin hir face was wan!
He said, "Zou are the first that eer
I wisht alive again."

He turn'd her owr and owr again;
O gin hir skin was whyte!
He said, "I might ha spard thy life,
To been some mans delyte.

"Busk and boon, my merry men all,
For ill dooms I do guess;
I cannae luik in that bonny face,
As it lyes on the grass."

"Them luiks to freits, my master deir,
Their freits will follow them;
Let it neir be said brave Edom o' Gordon
Was daunted with a dame."

O then she spied hir ain deir lord,
As he came owr the lee;
He saw his castle in a fire,
As far as he could see.

"Put on, put on, my mighty men,
As fast as ze can drie,
For he that's hindmost of my men,
Sall neir get guid o' me."

And some they raid, and some they ran,
Fu fast out owr the plain,
But lang, lang, eer he coud get up,
They were a' deid and slain.

But mony were the mudie * men
Lay gasping on the green;
For o' fifty men that Edom brought out
There were but five gaed heme.

And mony were the mudie men
Lay gasping on the green,
And mony were the fair ladys
Lay lemanless at heme.

And round and round the waes † he went,
Their ashes for to view;
At last into the flames he flew,
And bad the world adieu!

* Bold. † Walls.

LORD THOMAS AND FAIR ANNET.

"*Given, with some corrections, from a MS. copy transmitted from Scotland.*"—PERCY.

LORD Thomas and fair Annet
Sate a' day on a hill;
Whan night was cum, and sun was sett,
They had not talkt their fill.

Lord Thomas said a word in jest,
Fair Annet took it ill:
"A' I will nevir wed a wife
Against my ain friends will."

"Gif ye wull nevir wed a wife,
A wife wull neir wed yee:"
Sae he his hame to tell his mither,
And knelt upon his knee.

"O rede,* O rede, mither," he says,
"A gude rede gie to mee:
O sall I tak the nut-browne bride,
And let faire Annet bee?"

"The nut-browne bride has gowd and gear,
Fair Annet she has gat nane;
And the little beauty fair Annet has,
O it wull soon be gane."

* Advise.

And he has till* his brother gane:
"Now, brother, rede ye mee;
A', sall I marrie the nut-browne bride,
And let fair Annet bee?"

* To.

"The nut-browne bride has oxen, brother,
The nut-browne bride has kye:
I wad hae ye marrie the nut-browne bride,
And cast fair Annet bye."

"Her oxen may dye i' the house, billie,
And her kye into the byre,
And I sall hae nothing to mysell,
Bot a fat fadge‡ by the fyre."

And he has till his sister gane:
"Now sister, rede ye mee;
O sall I marrie the nut-browne bride,
And set fair Annet free?"

"Ise rede ye tak fair Annet, Thomas,
And let the browne bride alane;
Lest ye sould sigh, and say, Alace,
What is this we brought hame!"

"No, I will tak my mithers counsel,
And marrie me owt o' hand;
And I will tak the nut-browne bride;
Fair Annet may leive the land."

Up then rose fair Annets father,
Twa hours or it wer day,
And he is gane into the bower
Wherein fair Annet lay.

"Rise up, rise up, fair Annet," he says,
"Put on your silken sheene;
Let us gae to St. Maries kirke,
And see that rich weddeen."

"My maides, gae to my dressing-roome,
And dress to me my hair;
Whair-eir yee laid a plait before,
See yee lay ten times mair.

‡ Clumsy woman.

"My maids, gae to my dressing-room,
And dress to me my smock;
The one half is o' the holland fine,
The other o' needle-work."

The horse fair Annet rade upon,
He amblit like the wind;
Wi' siller he was shod before,
Wi' burning gowd behind.

Four and twanty siller bells
Wer a' tyed till his mane,
And yae tift o' the norland wind,
They tinkled ane by ane.

Four and twanty gay gude knichts
Rade by fair Annets side,
And four and twanty fair ladies,
As gin she had bin a bride.

And whan she cam to Maries kirk,
She sat on Maries stean:
The cleading* that fair Annet had on
It skinkled in their een.

And whan she cam into the kirk,
She shimmer'd like the sun;
The belt that was about her waist,
Was a' wi' pearles bedone.

She sat her by the nut-browne bride,
And her een they wer sae clear,
Lord Thomas he clean forgat the bride,
Whan fair Annet she drew near.

He had a rose into his hand,
And he gave it kisses three,
And reaching by the nut-browne bride,
Laid it on fair Annets knee.

* Clothing.

Up than spak the nut-browne bride,
She spak wi' meikle spite;
"And whair gat ye that rose-water,
That does mak yee sae white?"

"O I did get the rose-water
Whair ye wull neir get nane,
For I did get that very rose-water
Into my mithers wame."

The bride she drew a long bodkin
Frae out her gay head-gear,
And strake fair Annet unto the heart,
That word she nevir spak mair.

Lord Thomas he saw fair Annet wex pale,
And marvelit what mote bee:
But whan he saw her dear hearts blude,
A' wood-wroth wexed hee.

He drew his dagger, that was sae sharp,
That was sae sharp and meet,
And drave into the nut-browne bride,
That fell deid at his feit.

"Now stay for me, dear Annet," he sed,
"Now stay, my dear," he cry'd;
Then strake the dagger untill his heart,
And fell deid by her side.

Lord Thomas was buried without kirk-wa',
Fair Annet within the quiere;
And o' the tane thair grew a birk,*
The other a bonny briere.

And ay they grew, and ay they threw,
As they wad faine be neare;
And by this ye may ken right weil,
They were twa luvers deare.

* Birch.

GERNUTUS THE JEW OF VENICE.

THE FIRST PART.

Printed from an ancient black-letter copy in the Pepys collection, entitled, "A new Song, shewing the crueltie of 'Gernutus, a Jewe,' who, lending to a merchant an hundred crowns, would have a pound of his fleshe, because he could not pay him at the time appointed. To the tune of "Black and Yellow."

IN Venice towne not long agoe
A cruel Jew did dwell,
Which lived all on usurie,
As Italian writers tell.

Gernutus called was the Jew,
Which never thought to dye,
Nor ever yet did any good
To them in streets that lie.

His life was like a barrow hogge,
That liveth many a day,
Yet never once doth any good,
Until men will him slay.

Or like a filthy heap of dung,
That lyeth in a whoard;
Which never can do any good,
Till it be spread abroad.

So fares it with the usurer,
He cannot sleep in rest
For feare the thiefe will him pursue,
To plucke him from his nest.

His heart doth thinke on many a wile
How to deceive the poore;
His mouth is almost ful of mucke,
Yet still he gapes for more.

His wife must lend a shilling,
For every weeke a penny;
Yet bring a pledge that is double worth,
If that you will have any.

And see, likewise, you keepe your day,
Or else you loose it all:
This was the living of the wife,
Her cow she did it call.

Within that citie dwelt that time
A marchant of great fame,
Which being distressed in his need,
Unto Gernutus came:

Desiring him to stand his friend
For twelvemonth and a day;
To lend to him an hundred crownes;
And he for it would pay

Whatsoever he would demand of him,
And pledges he should have:
"No," quoth the Jew, with flearing lookes,
"Sir, aske what you will have.

"No penny for the loane of it
For one year you shall pay;
You may doe me as good a turne,
Before my dying day.

"But we will have a merry jeast,
For to be talked long:
You shall make me a bond," quoth he,
"That shall be large and strong.

"And this shall be the forfeyture,—
Of your owne fleshe a pound:
If you agree, make you the bond,
And here is a hundred crownes."

"With right good will," the marchant he says,
And so the bond was made.
When twelve month and a day drew on,
That backe it should be payd,

The marchants ships were all at sea,
And money came not in;
Which way to take, or what to doe,
To thinke he doth begin.

And to Gernutus strait he comes,
With cap and bended knee;
And sayde to him, "Of curtesie,
I pray you beare with mee.

"My day is come, and I have not
The money for to pay;
And little good the forfeyture
Will doe you, I dare say."

"With all my heart," Gernutus sayd,
"Commaund it to your minde:
In thinges of bigger waight then this
You shall me ready finde."

He goes his way; the day once past,
Gernutus doth not slacke
To get a sergiant presently,
And clapt him on the backe.

And layd him into prison strong,
And sued his bond withall;
And when the judgement day was come,
For judgement he did call.

The marchants friends came thither fast,
With many a weeping eye,
For other means they could not find,
But he that day must dye.

THE SECOND PART.

Of the Jews crueltie; setting foorth the mercifulnesse of the Judge towards the Marchant. To the tune of "Black and Yellow."

Some offered for his hundred crownes
Five hundred for to pay;
And some a thousand, two or three,
Yet still he did denay.

And at the last ten thousand crownes
They offered, him to save:
Gernutus sayd, "I will no gold,
My forfeite I will have.

"A pound of fleshe is my demand,
And that shall be my hire."
Then sayd the judge, "Yet, good my friend,
Let me of you desire

"To take the fleshe from such a place,
As yet you let him live:
Do so, and lo! an hundred crownes
To thee here will I give."

"No, no," quoth he, "no, judgement here;
For this it shall be tride;
For I will have my pound of fleshe
From under his right side."

It grieved all the companie
His crueltie to see,
For neither friend nor foe could helpe
But he must spoyled bee.

The bloudie Jew now ready is
With whetted blade in hand,
To spoyle the bloud of innocent,
By forfeit of his bond.

And as he was about to strike
In him the deadly blow,
"Stay," quoth the judge, "thy crueltie;
I charge thee to do so.

"Sith needs thou wilt thy forfeit have,
Which is of flesh a pound,
See that thou shed no drop of bloud,
Nor yet the man confound.

"For if thou doe, like murderer
Thou here shalt hanged be:
Likewise of flesh see that thou cut
No more than longes to thee.

" For if thou take either more or lesse,
To the value of a mite,
Thou shalt be hanged presently,
As is both law and right."

Gernutus now waxt franticke mad,
And wotes not what to say;
Quoth he at last, "Ten thousand crownes
I will that he shall pay;

"And so I graunt to set him free."
The judge doth answere make;
"You shall not have a penny given;
Your forfeyture now take."

At the last he doth demaund
But for to have his owne;
"No," quoth the judge, "doe as you list,
Thy judgement shall be showne.

"Either take your pound of flesh," quoth he,
"Or cancell me your bond:"
"O cruell judge," then quoth the Jew,
"That doth against me stand!"

And so with griping grieved mind
He biddeth them fare-well:
Then all the people prays'd the Lord,
That ever this heard tell.

Good people, that doe heare this song,
For trueth I dare well say,
That many a wretch as ill as hee
Doth live now at this day;

That seeketh nothing but the spoyle
Of many a wealthy man,
And for to trap the innocent
Deviseth what they can.

From whome the Lord deliver me,
And every Christian too,
And send to them like sentence eke
That meaneth so to do.

KING HENRIE THE FIFTH'S CONQUEST.

"From the singing of the late Francis King, of Skipton in Craven, an eccentric character, who was well known in the western dales of Yorkshire as 'The Skipton Minstrel.'"—ANCIENT POEMS, &c.

S our king lay musing on his bed,
He bethought himself upon a time
Of a tribute that was due from France,
Had not been paid for so long a time.
Down, a-down, a-down, a-down,
Down, a-down, a-down.

He callèd on his trusty page,
His trusty page then callèd he,
"O you must go to the king of France,
O you must go right speedilie.

"And tell him of my tribute due,
Ten ton of gold that's due to me,
That he must send me my tribute home,
Or in French land he soon will me see."

O then away went the trusty page,
Away, away, and away went he,
Until he came to the king of France;
Lo! he fell down on his bended knee.

"My master greets you, worthy Sire;
Ten ton of gold there is due, says he;
You must send him his tribute home,
Or in French land you will soon him see."

"Your master's young, and of tender years,
Not fit to come into my degree;
But I will send him three tennis balls,
That with them learn to play may he."

O then away came the trusty page,
Away, and away, and away came he,
Until he came to our gracious king;
Lo! he fell down on his bended knee.

"What news, what news, my trusty page,
What news, what news, hast thou brought to me?"
"I've brought such news from the king of France,
That you and he will ne'er agree.

"He says you're young, and of tender years,
Not fit to come into his degree;
But he will send you three tennis balls,
That with them you may learn to play."

O then bespoke our noble king,
A solemn vow then vowèd he;
"I'll promise him such tennis balls,
As in French lands he ne'er did see.

"Go, call up Cheshire and Lancashire,
And Derby hills, that are so free;
Not a married man, nor a widow's son,
For the widow's cry shall not go with me."

They called up Cheshire and Lancashire,
And Derby lads that were so free;
Not a married man, nor a widow's son,
Yet they were a jovial bold companie.

O then he sailed to fair French land,
With drums and trumpets so merrilie;
O then bespoke the king of France,
"Yonder comes proud king Henrie."

The first fire that the Frenchmen gave,
They killed our Englishmen so free,
We killed ten thousand of the French,
And the rest of them they were forced to flee.

And then we marched to Paris gates,
With drums and trumpets so merrilie;
O then bespoke the king of France,
"Lord have mercy on my poor men and me!

"Go! tell him I'll send home his tribute due,
Ten ton of gold that is due from me;
And the fairest flower that is in our French land
To the Rose of England it shall go free."

SIR ANDREW BARTON.

The council-board of England, [*A.D.* 1511] *at which the Earl of Surrey held the chief place, was daily pestered with complaints from the sailors and merchants, that a Scotch seaman, called Sir Andrew Barton, under pretence of searching for Portuguese goods, interrupted the English navigation. Henry the Eighth's situation at that time rendered him backward from breaking with Scotland, so that their complaints were but coldly received. The Earl of Surrey, however, could not smother his indignation, but gallantly declared at the council-board, that while he had an estate that could furnish out a ship, or a son that was capable of commanding one, the narrow seas should not be infested.*

"*Sir Andrew Barton, who commanded the two Scotch ships, had the reputation of being one of the ablest sea officers of his time. By his depredations, he had amassed great wealth, and his ships were very richly laden. Henry, notwithstanding his situation, could not refuse the generous offer made by the Earl of Surrey. Two ships were immediately fitted out and put to sea with letters of marque, under his two sons, Sir Thomas and Sir Edward Howard. After encountering a great deal of foul weather, Sir Thomas came up with the Lion, which was commanded by Sir Andrew Barton in person; and Sir Edward came up with the Union, Barton's other ship, the Bark of Scotland. The engagement which ensued was extremely obstinate on both sides; but at last the fortune of the Howards prevailed. Sir Andrew was killed, fighting bravely, and encouraging his men with his whistle, to hold out to the last; and the two Scotch ships, with their crews, were carried into the River Thames, Aug.* 2, 1511."—GUTHRIE'S PEERAGE, QUOTED BY PERCY.

THE FIRST PART.

WHEN Flora with her fragrant flowers
Bedeckt the earth so trim and gaye,
And Neptune with his daintye showers
Came to present the monthe of Maye,
King Henrye rode to take the ayre,
Over the river of Thames past hee;
When eighty merchants of London came,
And downe they knelt upon their knee.

"O yee are welcome, rich merchànts,
Good saylors, welcome unto mee:"
They swore by the rood, they were saylors good,
But rich merchànts they cold not bee.
"To France nor Flanders dare we pass,
Nor Bordeaux voyage dare we fare;
And all for a robber that lyes on the seas,
Who robbs us of our merchant ware."

King Henrye frownd, and turned him rounde,
And swore by the Lord that was mickle of might,
"I thought he had not beene in the world,
Durst have wrought England such unright."
The merchants sighed, and said, "Alas!"
And thus they did their answer frame;
"He is a proud Scott, that robbs on the seas,
And Sir Andrewe Barton is his name."

The king lookt over his left shoulder,
And an angrye look then lookèd hee;
"Have I never a lorde in all my realme,
Will feitch yond traytor unto mee?"
"Yea, that dare I," Lord Charles Howard sayes;
"Yea, that dare I, with heart and hand;
If it please your grace to give me leave,
Myselfe will be the only man."

"Thou art but yong," the kyng replyed,
"Yond Scott hath numbred manye a yeare:"
"Trust me, my liege, Ile make him quail,
Or before my prince I will never appeare."
"Then bowemen and gunners thou shalt have,
And chuse them over my realme so free;
Besides good mariners, and shipp-boyes,
To guide the great shipp on the sea."

The first man that Lord Howard chose,
Was the ablest gunner in all the realm,
Thoughe he was threescore yeeres and ten;
Good Peter Simon was his name.
"Peter," sais hee, "I must to the sea,
To bring home a traytor live or dead;
Before all others I have chosen thee,
Of a hundred gunners to be the head."

"If you, my lord, have chosen mee
Of a hundred gunners to be the head,
Then hang me up on your maine-mast tree,
If I misse my marke one shilling bread." *
My lord then chose a boweman rare,
Whose active hands had gained fame;
In Yorkshire was this gentleman borne,
And William Horseley was his name.

"Horsley," sayd he, "I must with speede
Go seeke a traytor on the sea,
And now of a hundred bowemen brave
To be the head I have chosen thee."
"If you," quoth hee, "have chosen mee
Of a hundred bowemen to be the head,
On your main-mast Ile hanged bee,
If I miss twelvescore one penny bread."

With pikse, and gunnes, and bowemen bold,
This noble Howard is gone to the sea;
With a valyant heart and a pleasant cheare,
Out at Thames mouth sayled he.
And days he scant had sayled three,
Upon the journey he tooke in hand,
But there he mett with a noble shipp,
And stoutely made itt stay and stand.

* Breadth.

"Thou must tell me," Lord Howard said,
'Nor who thou art, and what's thy name;
And shewe me where thy dwelling is,
And whither bound, and whence thou came."
"My name is Henry Hunt," quoth hee,
With a heavye heart, and a carefull mind;
"I and my shipp doe both belong
To the Newcastle that stands upon Tyne."

"Hast thou not heard, nowe, Henrye Hunt,
As thou hast sayled by daye and by night,
Of a Scottish robber on the seas;
Men call him Sir Andrew Barton, knight?"
Then ever he sighèd, and sayd "Alas!"
With a grieved mind, and well-away,
"But over-well I knowe that wight;
I was his prisoner yesterday.

"As I was sayling uppon the sea,
A Burdeaux voyage for to fare,
To his hach-borde he clasped me,
And robd me of all my merchant ware.
And mickle debts, God wot, I owe,
And every man will have his owne,
And I am nowe to London bounde,
Of our gracious king to beg a boone."

"That shall not need," Lord Howard sais;
"Lett me but once that robber see,
For every penny tane thee froe
It shall be doubled shillings three."
"Nowe Gode forfend," the merchant saide,
"That you shold seek soe far amisse!
God keepe you out of that traitors hands!
Full litle ye wott what a man hee is.

"Hee is brasse within, and steele without,
With beames on his topcastle stronge;
And eighteen pieces of ordinance
He carries on each side along.
And he hath a pinnace deerlye dight,
St. Andrewes crosse, that is his guide;
His pinnace beareth ninescore men,
And fifteen canons on each side.

"Were ye twentye shippes, and he but one,
I sweare by kirke, and bower, and hall,
He wold overcome them everye one,
If once his beames they doe downe fall."
"This is cold comfort," sais my lord,
"To wellcome a stranger thus to the sea:
Yet Ile bring him and his shipp to shore,
Or to Scotland hee shall carrye mee."

"Then a noble gunner you must have,
And he must aim well with his ee,
And sinke his pinnace into the sea,
Or else hee never orecome will bee.
And if you chance his shipp to borde,
This counsel I must give withall,
Let no man to his topcastle goe
To strive to let his beams downe fall.

"And seven pieces of ordinance,
I pray your honour lend to mee,
On each side of my shipp along,
And I will lead you on the sea.
A glasse Ile sett, that may be seene,
Whether you sayle by day or night;
And, to-morrowe, I sweare, by nine of the clocke,
You shall meet with Sir Andrewe Barton, knight."

THE SECOND PART.

THE merchant sett my lorde a glasse,
Soe well apparent in his sight,
And on the morrowe, by nine of the clocke,
He shewed him Sir Andrewe Barton, knight.
His hachebord it was hached with gold,
Soe deerlye dight it dazzled the ee;
"Nowe by my faith," Lord Howarde sais,
"This is a gallant sight to see.

"Take in your ancyents,* standards eke,
So close that no man may them see;
And put me forth a white willowe wand,
As merchants use to sayle the sea."
But they stirred neither top nor mast;
Stoutly they past Sir Andrew by;
"What English churles are yonder," he sayd,
"That can soe litle curtesye?

"Now by the roode, three yeares and more
I have been admirall over the sea,
And never an English nor Portingall
Without my leave can passe this way."
Then called he forth his stout pinnàce;
"Fetch backe yond pedlars nowe to mee:
I sweare by the masse, yon English churles
Shall all hang att my maine-mast tree."

With that the pinnace itt shott off;
Full well Lord Howard might it ken;
For itt stroke down my lord's fore-mast,
And killed fourteen of his men.

* Flags.

"Come hither, Simon," sayes my lord,
"Looke that thy word be true, thou said;
For at my main-mast thou shalt hang,
If thou misse thy marke one shilling bread."

Simon was old, but his heart itt was bold;
His ordinance he laid right lowe,
He put in chaine full nine yardes long,
With other great shott, lesse and moe,
And he lette goe his great gunnes shott;
Soe well he settled itt with his ee,
The first sight that Sir Andrew sawe,
He see his pinnace sunke in the sea.

And when he saw his pinnace sunke,
Lord, how his heart with rage did swell!
"Nowe cutt my ropes, itt is time to be gon;
Ile fetch yond pedlars backe mysell."
When my lord sawe Sir Andrewe loose,
Within his heart hee was full faine;
"Nowe spread your ancyents, strike up drummes,
Sound all your trumpetts out amaine."

"Fight on, my men," Sir Andrewe sais,
"Weale, howsoever this geere will sway;
Itt is my lord admirall of Englànd,
Is come to seeke mee on the sea."
Simon had a sonne, who shott right well,
That did Sir Andrewe mickle scare;
In att his decke he gave a shott,
Killed threescore of his men of warre.

Then Henrye Hunt, with rigour hott,
Came bravely on the other side;
Soone he drove downe his fore-mast tree,
And killed fourscore men beside.

"Nowe, out alas!" Sir Andrewe cryed,
"What may a man now thinke or say?
Yonder merchant theefe, that pierceth mee,
He was my prisoner yesterday.

"Come hither to me, thou Gordon good,
That aye wast readye att my call;
I will give thee three hundred pounds,
If thou wilt let my beames downe fall."
Lord Howard hee then calld in haste,
"Horselye, see thou be true in stead;
For thou shalt at the maine-mast hang,
If thou misse twelvescore one penny bread."

Then Gordon swarved the maine-mast tree,
He swarved it with might and maine;
But Horseley with a bearing arrowe,
Stroke the Gordon through the braine;
And he fell unto the haches again,
And sore his deadlye wounde did bleede:
Then word went through Sir Andrews men,
How that the Gordon hee was dead.

"Come hither to mee, James Hambilton,
Thou art my only sisters sonne;
If thou wilt let my beames downe fall,
Six hundred nobles thou hast wonne."
With that he swarved the main-mast tree,
He swarved it with nimble art;
But Horseley with a broad arrowe
Pierced the Hambilton thorough the heart.

And downe he fell upon the deck,
That with his blood did streame amaine:
Then every Scott cryed, "Well-away!
Alas a comelye youth is slaine!"

All woe begone was Sir Andrew then,
With griefe and rage his heart did swell;
"Go fetch me forth my armour of proofe,
For I will to the topcastle mysell.

"Goe fetch me forth my armour of proofe,
That gilded is with gold soe cleare;
God be with my brother John of Barton!
Against the Portingalls hee it ware.
And when he had on this armour of proofe,
He was a gallant sight to see;
Ah! nere didst thou meet with living wight,
My deere brothèr, could cope with thee."

"Come hither, Horseley," sayes my lord,
"And looke your shaft that itt goe right;
Shoot a good shoote in time of need,
And for it thou shalt be made a knight."
"Ile shoot my best," quoth Horseley then,
"Your honour shall see, with might and maine
But if I were hanged at your maine-mast,
I have now left but arrowes twaine."

Sir Andrew he did swarve the tree,
With right good will he swarved then,
Upon his breast did Horseley hitt,
But the arrow bounded back agen.
Then Horseley spyed a privye place,
With a perfect eye, in a secrette part;
Under the spole of his right arme
He smote Sir Andrew to the heart.

"Fight on, my men," Sir Andrew sayes,
"A little Ime hurt, but yett not slaine;
Ile but lye downe and bleede a while,
And then Ile rise and fight againe.

Fight on, my men," Sir Andrew sayes,
"And never flinche before the foe;
And stand fast by St. Andrewes crosse,
Untill you heare my whistle blowe."

They never heard his whistle blow,
Which made their hearts waxe sore adread:
Then Horseley sayd, "Aboard, my lord,
For well I wott Sir Andrew's dead."
They boarded then his noble shipp,
They boarded it with might and maine;
Eighteen score Scots alive they found,
The rest were either maimed or slaine.

Lord Howard tooke a sword in hand,
And off he smote Sir Andrewes head;
"I must have left England many a daye,
If thou wert alive as thou art dead."
He caused his body to be cast
Over the hatchbord into the sea,
And about his middle three hundred crownes:
"Wherever thou land, this will bury thee."

Thus from the warres Lord Howard came,
And backe he sayled ore the maine;
With mickle joy and triumphing
Into Thames mouth he came againe.
Lord Howard then a letter wrote,
And sealed it with seale and ring;
"Such a noble prize have I brought to your grace
As never did subject to a king.

"Sir Andrewes shipp I bring with mee,
A braver shipp was never none;
Nowe hath your grace two shipps of warr,
Before in England was but one." *
King Henryes grace with royall cheere
Welcomed the noble Howard home;
"And where," said he, "is this rover stout,
That I myselfe may give the doome?"

* That is the Great Harry, built in 1504, at an expense of fourteen thousand pounds.

"The rover, he is safe, my liege,
Full many a fadom in the sea;
If he were alive as he is dead,
I must have left England many a day.
And your grace may thank four men i' the ship
For the victory wee have wonne;
These are William Horseley, Henry Hunt,
And Peter Simon, and his sonne."

"To Henry Hunt," the king then sayd,
"In lieu of what was from thee tane,
A noble a day now thou shalt have,
Sir Andrewes jewels and his chayne.
And Horseley thou shalt be a knight,
And lands and livings shalt have store;
Howard shall be Erle Surrye hight,
As Howards erst have been before.

"Nowe, Peter Simon, thou art old,
I will maintaine thee and thy sonne;
And the men shall have five hundred markes
For the good service they have done."
Then in came the queene with ladyes fair,
To see Sir Andrewe Barton, knight;
They weend that hee were brought on shore,
And thought to have seen a gallant sight.

But when they see his deadlye face,
And eyes soe hollow in his head,
"I wold give," quoth the king, "a thousand markes
This man were alive as hee is dead.
Yett for the manfull part hee playd,
Which fought soe well with heart and hand,
His men shall have twelvepence a day,
Till they come to my brother kings high land."

BRAVE LORD WILLOUGHBEY.

"Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby of Eresby, had, in the year 1586, *distinguished himself at the siege of Zutphen, in the Low Countries. He was the year after made general of the English forces in the United Provinces, in room of the Earl of Leicester, who was recalled. This gave him an opportunity of signalizing his courage and military skill in several actions against the Spaniards. One of these, greatly exaggerated by popular report, is probably the subject of this old ballad, which, on account of its flattering encomiums on English valour, hath always been a favourite with the people.*

"Lord Willoughbie died in 1601.—*Both Norris and Turner were famous among the military men of that age."*—PERCY.

THE fifteenth day of July,
With glistering spear and shield,
A famous fight in Flanders
Was foughten in the field:
The most couragious officers
Were English captains three;
But the bravest man in battel
Was brave Lord Willoughbèy.

The next was Captain Norris,
A valiant man was hee;
The other Captain Turner,
From field would never flee.
With fifteen hundred fighting men,
Alas! there were no more,
They fought with fourteen thousand then,
Upon the bloody shore.

"Stand to it, noble pikemen,
And look you round about:
And shoot you right, you bow-men,
And we will keep them out.
You musquet and calliver men,
Do you prove true to me:
I'le be the formost man in fight,"
Says brave Lord Willoughbèy.

And then the bloody enemy
They fiercely did assail,
And fought it out most furiously,
Not doubting to prevail.
The wounded men on both sides fell,
Most pitious for to see,
Yet nothing could the courage quell
Of brave Lord Willoughbèy.

For seven hours, to all mens view,
This fight endured sore,
Until our men so feeble grew
That they could fight no more;
And then upon dead horses,
Full savourly they eat,
And drank the puddle water,
They could no better get.

When they had fed so freely,
They kneeled on the ground,
And praised God devoutly
For the favour they had found;
And beating up their colours,
The fight they did renew,
And turning tow'rds the Spaniard,
A thousand more they slew.

The sharp steel-pointed arrows,
And bullets thick did fly;
Then did our valiant soldiers
Charge on most furiously:

Which made the Spaniards waver;
They thought it best to flee;
They fear'd the stout behaviour
Of brave Lord Willoughbèy.

Then quoth the Spanish general,
"Come, let us march away;
I fear we shall be spoiled all
If here we longer stay;
For yonder comes Lord Willoughbey,
With courage fierce and fell;
He will not give one inch of way
For all the devils in hell."

And then the fearful enemy
Was quickly put to flight,
Our men persued couragiously,
And caught their forces quite;
But at [the] last they gave a shout,
Which ecchoed through the sky;
"God and St. George for England!"
The conquerers did cry.

This news was brought to England
With all the speed might be,
And soon our gracious queen was told
Of this same victory.
"O this is brave Lord Willoughbey,
My love that ever won;
Of all the Lords of honour,
'Tis he great deeds hath done."

To the souldiers that were maimed
And wounded in the fray,
The queen allowed a pension
Of fifteen pence a day;

And from all costs and charges
She quit and set them free:
And this she did all for the sake
Of brave Lord Willoughbèy.

Then courage, noble Englishmen,
And never be dismaid;
If that we be but one to ten,
We will not be afraid
To fight with foraign enemies,
And set our nation free:
And thus I end the bloody bout
Of brave Lord Willoughbèy.

KING JOHN AND THE ABBOT OF CANTERBURY.

"The common popular ballad of 'King John and the Abbot,' seems to have been abridged and modernized about the time of James I. from one much older, entitled 'King John and the Bishop of Canterbury.

"The following is chiefly printed from an ancient black-letter copy, to the tune of 'Derry-down.'"—PERCY.

N ancient story Ile tell you anon
Of a notable prince, that was called King John;
And he ruled England with maine and with might,
For he did great wrong, and maintein'd little right.

And Ile tell you a story, a story so merrye,
Concerning the Abbott of Canterbùrye;
How for his house-keeping and high renowne,
They rode poste for him to fair London towne.

An hundred men, the king did heare say,
The abbot kept in his house every day;
And fifty golde chaynes, without any doubt,
In velvet coates waited the abbot about.

"How now, father abbot, I heare it of thee,
Thou keepest a farre better house than mee;
And for thy house-keeping and high renowne,
I feare thou work'st treason against my crown."

"My liege," quo' the abbot, "I would it were knowne
I never spend nothing, but what is my owne;
And I trust your grace will doe me no deere,
For spending of my owne true-gotten geere."

"Yes, yes, father abbot, thy fault it is highe,
And now for the same thou needest must dye;
For except thou canst answer me questions three,
Thy head shall be smitten from thy bodie.

"And first," quo the king, "when I'm in this stead,
With my crowne of golde so faire on my head,
Among all my liege-men so noble of birthe,
Thou must tell me to one penny what I am worthe.

"Secondlye, tell me, without any doubt,
How soone I may ride the whole world about;
And at the third question thou must not shrink,
But tell me here truly what I do think."

"O these are hard questions for my shallow witt,
Nor I cannot answer your grace as yet:
But if you will give me but three weekes space,
Ile do my endeavour to answer your grace."

"Now three weeks space to thee will I give,
And that is the longest time thou hast to live;
For if thou dost not answer my questions three,
Thy lands and thy livings are forfeit to mee."

Away rode the abbot all sad at that word,
And he rode to Cambridge, and Oxenford;
But never a doctor there was so wise,
That could with his learning an answer devise.

Then home rode the abbot of comfort so cold,
And he mett his shepheard a going to fold:
"How now, my lord abbot, you are welcome home;
What newes do you bring us from good King John?"

"Sad newes, sad newes, shepheard, I must give,
That I have but three days more to live;
For if I do not answer him questions three,
My head will be smitten from my bodie.

"The first is to tell him there in that stead,
With his crowne of golde so fair on his head,
Among all his liege men so noble of birth,
To within one penny of what he is worth.

"The seconde, to tell him, without any doubt,
How soone he may ride this whole world about;
And at the third question I must not shrinke,
But tell him there truly what he does thinke."

"Now cheare up, sire abbot, did you never hear yet,
That a fool he may learne a wise man witt?
Lend me horse, and serving men, and your apparel,
And Ile ride to London to answere your quarrel.

"Nay frowne not, if it hath bin told unto mee,
I am like your lordship, as ever may bee;
And if you will but lend me your gowne,
There is none shall knowe us at fair London towne."

"Now horses and serving-men thou shalt have,
With sumptuous array most gallant and brave,
With crozier, and miter, and rochet, and cope,
Fit to appear 'fore our fader the pope."

"Now, welcome, sire abbot," the king he did say,
"'Tis well thou'rt come back to keepe thy day:
For and if thou canst answer my questions three,
Thy life and thy living both saved shall bee.

"And first, when thou seest me here in this stead,
With my crowne of golde so fair on my head,
Among all my liege-men so noble of birthe,
Tell me to one penny what I am worth."

"For thirty pence our Saviour was sold
Among the false Jewes, as I have bin told:
And twenty-nine is the worth of thee,
For I thinke thou art one penny worser than hee."

The king he laughed, and swore by St. Bittel,*
"I did not think I had been worth so littel!
—Now secondly tell me, without any doubt,
How soone I may ride this whole world about."

"You must rise with the sun, and ride with the same
Until the next morning he riseth againe;
And then your grace need not make any doubt
But in twenty-four hours you'll ride it about."

The king he laughed, and swore by St. Jone,
"I did not think it could be gone so soone!
—Now from the third question thou must not shrinke,
But tell me here truly what I do thinke."

"Yea, that shall I do, and make your grace merry;
You thinke I'm the abbot of Canterbury;
But I'm his poor shepheard, as plain you may see,
That am come to beg pardon for him and for mee."

The king he laughed, and swore by the masse,
"Ile make thee lord abbot this day in his place!"
"Now naye, my liege, be not in such speede,
For alacke I can neither write ne reade."

Four nobles a week, then I will give thee,
For this merry jest thou hast showne unto mee;
And tell the old abbot when thou comest home,
Thou hast brought him a pardon from good King John."

* St. Botolph.

KING EDWARD FOURTH AND THE TANNER OF TAMWORTH.

"The following text is selected from two copies in black letter. The one in the Bodleian Library, entitled 'A merrie, pleasant, and delectable historie betweene King Edward the Fourth, and a Tanner of Tamworth,' &c. printed at London by John Danter, 1596. *This copy, ancient as it now is, appears to have been modernized and altered at the time it was published: and many vestiges of the more ancient readings were recovered from another copy (though more recently printed) in one sheet folio, without date, in the Pepys collection."*—PERCY.

N summer time, when leaves grow greene,
And blossoms bedecke the tree,
King Edward wolde a hunting ryde,
Some pastime for to see.

With hawke and hounde he made him bowne,
With horne, and eke with bowe;
To Drayton Basset he tooke his waye,
With all his lordes a rowe.

And he had ridden ore dale and downe
By eight of clocke in the day,
When he was ware of a bold tannèr,
Come ryding along the waye.

A fayre russet coat the tanner had on,
Fast buttoned under his chin,
And under him a good cow-hide,
And a mare of four shilling.

"Nowe stande you still, my good lordes all,
Under the grene wood spraye;
And I will wend to yonder fellowe,
To weet what he will saye.

"God speede, God speede thee," sayd our king,
"Thou art welcome, sir," sayd hee;
"The readyest waye to Drayton Basset
I praye thee to shewe to mee."

"To Drayton Basset woldst thou goe
Fro the place where thou dost stand,
The next payre of gallowes thou comest unto,
Turne in upon thy right hand."

"That is an unreadye waye," sayd our king,
"Thou doest but jest I see;
Nowe shewe me out the nearest waye,
And I pray thee wend with mee."

"Awaye with a vengeance!" quoth the tanner:
"I hold thee out of thy witt:
All daye have I rydden on Brocke my mare,
And I am fasting yett."

"Go with me downe to Drayton Basset,
No daynties we will spare;
All daye shalt thou eate and drinke of the best,
And I will paye thy fare."

"Gramercye for nothing," the tanner replyde,
"Thou payest no fare of mine:
I trowe I've more nobles in my purse,
Than thou hast pence in thine."

"God give thee joy of them," sayd the king,
"And send them well to priefe;"
The tanner wolde faine have beene awaye,
For he weende he had beene a thiefe.

"What art thou," hee sayde, "thou fine fellòwe?
Of thee I am in great feare;
For the cloathes thou wearest upon thy backe
Might beseeme a lord to weare."

"I never stole them," quoth our king,
"I tell you, sir, by the roode;"
"Then thou playest, as many unthrift doth,
And standest in midds of thy goode."*

"What tydinges heare you," sayd the kynge,
"As you ryde farre and neare?"
"I heare no tydinges, sir, by the masse,
But that cowe-hides are deare."

"Cowe-hides! cowe-hides! what things are those?
I marvell what they bee?"
"What, art thou a foole?" the tanner reply'd;
"I carry one under mee."

"What craftsman art thou?" sayd the king;
"I praye thee tell me trowe:"
"I am a barker, sir, by my trade;
Nowe tell me what art thou?"

"I am a poore courtier, sir," quoth he,
"That am forth of service worne;
And faine I wolde thy prentise bee,
Thy cunninge for to learne."

"Marrye heaven forfend," the tanner replyde,
"That thou my prentise were;
Thou woldst spend more good than I shold winne
By fortye shilling a yere."

"Yet one thinge wolde I," sayd our king,
"If thou wilt not seeme strange;
Thoughe my horse be better than thy mare,
Yet with thee I faine wold change."

* *i.e.* Hast no other wealth, but what thou carriest about thee.—Percy.

"Why if with me thou faine wilt change,
As change full well maye wee,
By the faith of my bodye, thou proude fellòwe,
I will have some boot of thee."

"That were against reason," sayd the king,
"I sweare, so mote I thee;
My horse is better than thy mare,
And that thou well mayst see."

"Yea, sir, but Brocke is gentle and mild,
And softly she will fare;
Thy horse is unrulye and wild, i-wiss,
Aye skipping here and theare."

"What boote wilt thou have?" our king reply'd;
"Now tell me in this stound;"
"Noe pence, nor half-pence, by my faye,
But a noble in gold so round."

"Here's twentye groates of white moneyè,
Sith thou wilt have it of mee;"
"I would have sworne now," quoth the tanner,
"Thou hadst not had one penniè.

"But since we two have made a change,
A change we must abide;
Although thou hast gotten Brocke my mare,
Thou gettest not my cowe-hide."

"I will not have it," sayd the kynge,
"I sweare, so mought I thee:
Thy foule cowe-hide I wolde not beare,
If thou woldst give it to mee."

The tanner hee tooke his good cowe-hide,
That of the cow was hilt,
And threwe it upon the king's sadèlle,
That was soe fayrelye gilte.

"Now help me up, thou fine fellòwe,
'Tis time that I were gone:
When I come home to Gyllian my wife,
Sheel say I am a gentilmon.'

When the tanner he was in the kinges sadèlle,
And his foote in his stirrup was,
He marvelled greatlye in his minde,
Whether it were golde or brass.

But when his steede saw the cows taile wagge,
And eke the blacke cowe-horne,
He stamped, and stared, and awaye he ranne,
As the devill had him borne.

The tanner he pulld, the tanner he sweat,
And held by the pummil fast;
At length the tanner came tumbling downe,
His necke he had well-nye brast.

"Take thy horse again with a vengeance," he sayd,
"With mee he shall not byde;"
"My horse wolde have borne thee well enoughe,
But he knewe not of thy cowe-hide.

"Yet if againe thou faine woldst change,
As change full well may wee,
By the faith of my bodye, thou jolly tannèr,
I will have some boote of thee."

"What boote wilt thou have?" the tanner replyd,
"Nowe tell me in this stounde;
"Noe pence, nor half-pence, sir, by my ıaye,
But I will have twentye pound."

"Here's twentye groates out of my purse,
And twentye I have of thine;
And I have one more, which we will spend
Together at the wine."

The king set a bugle horne to his mouthe,
And blewe both loude and shrille;
And soone came lords, and soone came knights,
Fast ryding over the hille.

"Nowe, out alas," the tanner he cryde,
"That ever I sawe this daye!
Thou art a strong thiefe; yon come thy fellowes
Will beare my cowe-hide away."

"They are no thieves," the king replyde,
"I sweare, soe mote I thee;
But they are lords of the north country,
Here come to hunt with mee."

And soone before our king they came,
And knelt downe on the grounde;
Then might the tanner have beene awaye,
He had lever than twentye pounde.

"A coller, a coller, here," sayd the king,
"A coller," he loud gan crye;
Then woulde he lever then twentye pound,
He had not beene so nighe.

"A coller! a coller!" the tanner he sayd,
"I trowe it will breed sorrowe;
After a coller commeth a halter;
I trow I shall be hang'd to-morrowe."

"Be not afraid, tanner," said our king;
"I tell thee, so mought I thee,
Lo here I make thee the best esquire
That is in the North countrie.

"For Plumpton-parke I will give thee,
With tenements faire beside,—
'Tis worth three hundred markes by the yeare,—
To maintaine thy good cow-hide."

"Gramercye, my liege," the tanner replyde;
"For the favour thou hast me showne,
If ever thou comest to merry Tamwòrth,
Neates leather shall clout thy shoen."

THE FROLICKSOME DUKE; OR, THE TINKER'S GOOD FORTUNE.

This story was probably derived from the East. It is the same as the tale of "The Sleeper awakened" in the Arabian Nights. The ballad is given from a black-letter copy in the Pepys collection.

NOW as fame does report, a young duke keeps a court,
One that pleases his fancy with frolicksome sport:
But amongst all the rest, here is one I protest,
Which will make you to smile when you hear the true jest:
A poor tinker he found, lying drunk on the ground,
As secure in sleep as if laid in a swound.

The duke said to his men, "William, Richard, and Ben,
Take him home to my palace, we'll sport with him then."
O'er a horse he was laid, and with care soon convey'd
To the palace, altho' he was poorly arrai'd:
Then they stript off his cloaths, both his shirt, shoes, and hose,
And they put him to bed for to take his repose.

Having pull'd off his shirt, which was all over durt,
They did give him clean holland, this was no great hurt:
On a bed of soft down, like a lord of renown,
They did lay him to sleep the drink out of his crown.
In the morning, when day, then admiring he lay,
For to see the rich chamber, both gaudy and gay.

Now he lay something late, in his rich bed of state,
Till at last knights and squires they on him did wait;
And the chamberlain bare, then did likewise declare,
He desired to know what apparel he'd ware:
The poor tinker amaz'd, on the gentleman gaz'd,
And admired how he to this honour was rais'd.

Tho' he seem'd something mute, yet he chose a rich suit,
Which he straitways put on without longer dispute,
With a star on his side, which the tinker offt ey'd,
And it seem'd for to swell him "no" little with pride;
For he said to himself, "Where is Joan my sweet wife?
Sure she never did see me so fine in her life."

From a convenient place, the right duke, his good grace,
Did observe his behaviour in every case.
To a garden of state, on the tinker they wait,
Trumpets sounding before him: thought he, this is great:
Where an hour or two, pleasant walks he did view,
With commanders and squires in scarlet and blew.

A fine dinner was drest, both for him and his guests;
He was plac'd at the table above all the rest,
In a rich chair "or bed," lin'd with fine crimson red,
With a rich golden canopy over his head:
As he sat at his meat, the musick play'd sweet,
With the choicest of singing his joys to compleat.

While the tinker did dine, he had plenty of wine,
Rich canary, with sherry and tent superfine.
Like a right honest soul, faith, he took off his bowl,
Till at last he began for to tumble and roul
From his chair to the floor, where he sleeping did snore,
Being seven times drunker than ever before.

Then the duke did ordain, they should strip him amain,
And restore him his old leather garments again:
'Twas a point next the worst, yet perform it they must,
And they carry'd him strait, where they found him at first,
Then he slept all the night, as indeed well he might;
But when he did waken, his joys took their flight.

For his glory "to him" so pleasant did seem,
That he thought it to be but a meer golden dream;
Till at length he was brought to the duke, where he sought
For a pardon, as fearing he had set him at nought.
But his highness he said, "Thou'rt a jolly bold blade:
Such a frolick before I think never was plaid."

Then his highness bespoke him a new suit and cloak,
Which he gave for the sake of this frolicksome joak,
Nay, and five hundred pound, with ten acres of ground:
"Thou shalt never," said he, "range the counteries round,
Crying old brass to mend, for I'll be thy good friend,
Nay, and Joan thy sweet wife shall my duchess attend."

Then the tinker reply'd, "What! must Joan my sweet bride
Be a lady in chariots of pleasure to ride?
Must we have gold and land ev'ry day at command?
Then I shall be a squire, I well understand.
Well I thank your good grace, and your love I embrace;
I was never before in so happy a case."

THE KING AND MILLER OF MANSFIELD.

"The following is printed, with corrections, from the Editor's folio MS. collated with an old black-letter copy in the Pepys collection, entitled 'A pleasant ballad of King Henry II. and the Miller of Mansfield, &c.'"—PERCY.

PART THE FIRST.

HENRY, our royall king, would ride a hunting
To the greene forest so pleasant and faire;
To see the harts skipping, and dainty does tripping,
Unto merry Sherwood his nobles repaire:
Hawke and hound were unbound, all things prepar'd
For the game, in the same, with good regard.

All a long summers day rode the king pleasantlye,
With all his princes and nobles eche one;
Chasing the hart and hind, and the bucke gallantlye,
Till the dark evening forc'd all to turne home.
Then at last, riding fast, he had lost quite
All his lords in the wood, late in the night.

Wandering thus wearilye, all alone, up and downe,
With a rude miller he mett at the last;
Asking the ready way unto faire Nottingham,
"Sir," quoth the miller, "I meane not to jest,
Yet I thinke, what I thinke, sooth for to say;
You doe not lightlye ride out of your way."

"Why, what dost thou think of me," quoth our king merrily,
"Passing thy judgment upon me so briefe?"
"Good faith," sayd the miller, "I mean not to flatter thee,
I guess thee to bee but some gentleman thiefe;
Stand thee backe, in the darke; light not adowne,
Lest that I presentlye crack thy knaves crowne."

"Thou dost abuse me much," quoth the king, saying thus;
"I am a gentleman; lodging I lacke."
"Thou hast not," quoth th' miller, "one groat in thy purse;
All thy inheritance hanges on thy backe."
"I have gold to discharge all that I call;
If it be forty pence, I will pay all."

"If thou beest a true man," then quoth the miller,
"I sweare by my toll-dish, I'll lodge thee all night."
"Here's my hand," quoth the king; "that was I ever."
"Nay, soft," quoth the miller, "thou may'st be a sprite.
Better I'll know thee, ere hands we will shake;
With none but honest men hands will I take."

Thus they went all along unto the millers house,
Where they were seething of puddings and souse;
The miller first enter'd in, after him went the king;
Never came hee in soe smoakye a house.
"Now," quoth hee, "let me see here what you are:"
Quoth the king, "Looke your fill, and doe not spare."

"I like well thy countenance, thou hast an honest face:
With my son Richard this night thou shalt lye."
Quoth his wife, "By my troth, it is a handsome youth,
Yet it's best, husband, to deal warilye.
Art thou no run-away, prythee, youth, tell?
Shew me thy passport, and all shal be wel."

Then our king presentlye, making lowe courtesye,
With his hatt in his hand, thus he did say;
"I have no passport, nor never was servitor,
But a poor courtyer, rode out of my way:
And for your kindness here offered to mee,
I will requite you in everye degree."

Then to the miller his wife whisper'd secretlye,
Saying, "It seemeth, this youth's of good kin,
Both by his apparel, and eke by his manners;
To turne him out, certainlye were a great sin."
"Yea," quoth hee, "you may see he hath some grace,
When he doth speake to his betters in place."

"Well," quo' the millers wife, "young man, ye're welcome here;
And, though I say it, well lodged shall be:
Fresh straw will I have laid on thy bed so brave,
And good brown hempen sheets likewise," quoth shee.
"Aye," quoth the good man; "and when that is done,
Thou shalt lye with no worse than our own sonne."

"Nay, first," quoth Richard, "good-fellowe, tell me true,
Hast thou noe creepers within thy gay hose?
Or art thou not troubled with the scabbado?"
"I pray," quoth the king, "what creatures are those?"
"Art thou not lowsy nor scabby?" quoth he:
"If thou beest, surely thou lyest not with mee."

This caus'd the king, suddenlye, to laugh most heartilye,
Till the teares trickled fast downe from his eyes.
Then to their supper were they set orderlye,
With hot bag-puddings, and good apple-pyes;
Nappy ale, good and stale, in a browne bowle,
Which did about the board merrilye trowle.

"Here," quoth the miller, "good fellowe, I drinke to thee,
And to all courtnalls that courteous be."
"I pledge thee," quoth our king, "and thanke thee heartilye
For my good welcome in everye degree:
And here, in like manner, I drinke to thy sonne."
"Do then," quoth Richard, "and quicke let it come."

"Wife," quoth the miller, "fetch me forth lightfoote,
And of his sweetnesse a little we'll taste."
A fair ven'son pastye brought she out presentlye,
"Eate," quoth the miller, "but, sir, make no waste.
"Here's dainty lightfoote!" "In faith," sayd the king,
"I never before eat so daintye a thing."

"I-wis," quoth Richard, "no daintye at all it is,
For we doe eate of it everye day."
"In what place," sayd our king, "may be bought like to this?"
"We never pay pennye for itt, by my fay:
From merry Sherwood we fetch it home here;
Now and then we make bold with our kings deer."

"Then I thinke," sayd our king, "that it is venison."
"Eche foole," quoth Richard, "full well may know that:
Never are wee without two or three in the roof,
Very well fleshed, and excellent fat:
But, prythee, say nothing wherever thou goe;
We would not, for two pence, the king should it knowe."

"Doubt not," then sayd the king, "my promist secresye;
The king shall never know more on't for mee:"
A cupp of lambs-wool they dranke unto him then,
And to their bedds they past presentlie.
The nobles, next morning, went all up and down,
For to seeke out the king in everye towne.

At last, at the millers cott, soone they espy'd him out,
As he was mounting upon his faire steede;
To whom they came presently, falling down on their knee;
Which made the millers heart wofully bleede;
Shaking and quaking, before him he stood,
Thinking he should have been hang'd, by the rood.

The king perceiving him fearfully trembling,
Drew forth his sword, but nothing he sed:
The miller downe did fall, crying before them all,
Doubting the king would have cut off his head.
But he his kind courtesye for to requite,
Gave him great living, and dubb'd him a knight.

PART THE SECONDE.

WHEN as our royall king came home from Nottingham,
And with his nobles at Westminster lay,
Recounting the sports and pastimes they had taken,
In this late progress along on the way,
Of them all, great and small, he did protest,
The miller of Mansfields sport liked him best.

"And now, my lords," quoth the king, "I am determined
Against St. Georges next sumptuous feast,
That this old miller, our new confirm'd knight,
With his son Richard, shall here be my guest:
For, in this merryment, 'tis my desire
To talke with the jolly knight, and the young squire."

When as the noble lords saw the kinges pleasantness,
They were right joyfull and glad in their hearts:
A pursuivant there was sent straighte on the business,
The which had often-times been in those parts.
When he came to the place where they did dwell,
His message orderlye then 'gan he tell.

"God save your worshippe," then said the messenger,
"And grant your ladye her own hearts desire;
And to your sonne Richard good fortune and happiness,
That sweet, gentle, and gallant young squire.
Our king greets you well, and thus he doth say,
You must come to the Court on St. George's day.

"Therefore, in any case, faile not to be in place."
"I-wis," quoth the miller, "this is an odd jest:
What should we doe there? faith, I am halfe afraid."
"I doubt," quoth Richard, "to be hang'd at the least."
"Nay," quoth the messenger, "you doe mistake;
Our king he provides a great feast for your sake."

Then sayd the miller, "By my troth, messenger,
Thou hast contented my worshippe full well:
Hold, here are three farthings, to quite thy gentleness,
For these happy tydings which thou dost tell.
Let me see, hear thou mee; tell to our king,
We'll wayt on his mastershipp in everye thing."

The pursuivant smiled at their simplicitye,
And making many leggs, tooke their reward,
And his leave taking with great humilitye,
To the kings court againe he repair'd;
Shewing unto his grace, merry and free,
The knightes most liberall gift and bountie.

When he was gone away, thus gan the miller say:
"Here come expences and charges indeed;
Now must we needs be brave, tho' we spend all we have,
For of new garments we have great need.
Of horses and serving-men we must have store,
With bridles and saddles, and twentye things more."

"Tushe, Sir John," quoth his wife, "why should you frett or frowne?
You shall ne'er be att no charges for mee;
For I will turne and trim up my old russet gowne,
With everye thing else as fine as may bee;
And on our mill-horses swift we will ride,
With pillowes and pannells, as we shall provide."

In this most statelye sort, rode they unto the court;
Their jolly sonne Richard rode foremost of all,
Who set up, for good hap, a cocks feather in his cap,
And so they jetted downe to the kings hall;
The merry old miller with hands on his side;
His wife like maid Marian did mince at that tide.

The king and his nobles, that heard of their coming,
Meeting this gallant knight with his brave traine,
"Welcome, sir knight," quoth he, "with your gay lady;
Good Sir John Cockle, once welcome againe;
And so is the squire of courage soe free."
Quoth Dicke, "A bots on you! do you know mee?"

The king and his courtiers laugh at this heartily,
While the king taketh them both by the hand;
With the court-dames and maids, like to the queen of spades,
The millers wife did soe orderly stand,
A milk-maids courtesye at every word;
And downe all the folkes were set to the board.

There the king royally, in princelye majestye,
Sate at his dinner with joy and delight;
When they had eaten well, then he to jesting fell,
And in a bowle of wine dranke to the knight:
"Here's to you both, in wine, ale, and beer;
Thanking you heartilye for my good cheer."

Quoth Sir John Cockle, "I'll pledge you a pottle,
Were it the best ale in Nottinghamshire:"
But then said our king, "Now I think of a thing;
Some of your lightfoote I would we had here."
Ho! ho!" quoth Richard, "full well I may say it
'Tis knavery to eate it, and then to betray it."

"Why art thou angry?" quoth our king merrilye;
"In faith, I take it now very unkind:
I thought thou wouldst pledge me in ale and wine heartily."
Quoth Dicke, "You are like to stay till I have din'd:
You feed us with twatling dishes soe small;
Zounds, a blacke-pudding is better than all."

"Aye, marry," quoth our king, "that were a daintye thing,
Could a man get but one here for to eate:"
With that Dicke straite arose, and pluckt one from his hose,
Which with heat of his breech gan to sweate.
The king made a proffer to snatch it away:—
"'Tis meat for your master: good sir, you must stay."

Thus in great merriment was the time wholly spent,
And then the ladyes prepared to dance:
Old Sir John Cockle, and Richard, incontinent
Unto their places the king did advance.
Here with the ladyes such sport they did make,
The nobles with laughing did make their sides ake.

Many thankes for their paines did the king give them,
Asking young Richard then, if he would wed;
"Among these ladyes free, tell me which liketh thee?"
Quoth he, "Jugg Grumball, Sir, with the red head,
She's my love, she's my life, her will I wed;
She hath sworn I shall have her maidenhead."

Then Sir John Cockle the king call'd unto him,
And of merry Sherwood made him o'erseer,
And gave him out of hand three hundred pound yearlye;
"Take heed now you steele no more of my deer;
And once a quarter let's here have your view;
And now, Sir John Cockle, I bid you adieu."

THE OLD CAP; OR, TIME'S ALTERATION.

Reprinted from "Elegant Extracts."

HEN this old cap was new,
'Tis since two hundred year,
No malice then we knew,
But all things plenty were:

All friendship now decays
(Believe me, this is true),
Which was not in those days
When this old cap was new.

The nobles of our land
Were much delighted then
To have at their command
A crew of lusty men,

Which by their coats were known,
Of tawny, red, or blue,
With crests on their sleeves shown,
When this old cap was new.

Now pride hath banish'd all,
Unto our land's reproach,
When he whose means are small
Maintains both horse and coach;

Instead of an hundred men,
The coach allows but two;
This was not thought on then,
When this old cap was new.

"A crew of lusty men."

Good hospitality
Was cherished then of many;
Now poor men starve and die,
And are not help'd by any;

For charity waxeth cold,
And love is found in few:
This was not in time of old,
When this old cap was new.

Wherever you travell'd then,
You might meet on the way
Brave knights and gentlemen,
Clad in their country grey,

That courteous would appear,
And kindly welcome you:
No puritans then were,
When this old cap was new.

Our ladies, in those days,
In civil habit went;
Broad cloth was then worth praise,
And gave the best content;

French fashions then were scorn'd;
Fond fangles then none knew;
Then modesty women adorn'd,
When this old cap was new.

The Holly-tree was poll'd
At Christmas for each hall;
There was fire to curb the cold,
And meat for great and small:

The neighbours were friendly bidden,
And all had welcome true;
The poor from the gates were not chidden
When this old cap was new.

Black jacks to every man
Were filled with wine and beer;
No pewter pot nor can
Did in those days appear.

Good cheer in a nobleman's house
Was counted a seemly show;
We wanted no brawn nor souse,
When this old cap was new.

We took not such delight
In cups of silver fine;
None under degree of a knight
In plate drank beer or wine.

Now each mechanical man
Hath a cupboard of plate for show;
Which was a rare thing then,
When this old cap was new.

God save our gracious king,
Oh, send him long to live!
And mischief on them bring
That will not their alms give;

But seek to rob the poor
Of that which is their due:
This was not in the time of yore,
When this old cap was new.

THE HEIR OF LINNE.

"The original of this ballad is found in the Editor's folio MS. the breaches and defects in which rendered the insertion of supplementary stanzas necessary. These it is hoped the reader will pardon, as indeed the completion of the story was suggested by a modern ballad on a similar subject. From the Scottish phrases here and there discernible in this poem, it would seem to have been originally composed beyond the Tweed."—PERCY.

PART THE FIRST.

ITHE and listen, gentlemen,
To sing a song I will beginne:
It is of a lord of faire Scotland,
Which was the unthrifty heire of Linne.

His father was a right good lord,
His mother a lady of high degree;
But they, alas! were dead him froe,
And he lov'd keeping companie.

To spend the daye with merry cheare,
To drinke and revell every night,
To card and dice from eve to morne,
It was, I ween, his hearts delighte.

To ride, to runne, to rant, to roare,
To alwaye spend and never spare,
I wott, an' it were the king himselfe,
Of gold and fee he mote be bare.

Soe fares the unthrifty lord of Linne
Till all his gold is gone and spent;
And he maun sell his landes so broad,
His house, and landes, and all his rent.

His father had a keen stewàrde,
And John o' the Scales was called hee:
But John is become a gentel-man,
And John has gott both gold and fee.

Sayes, "Welcome, welcome, Lord of Linne,
Let nought disturb thy merry cheere;
Iff thou wilt sell thy landes soe broad,
Good store of gold Ile give thee heere."

"My gold is gone, my money is spent;
My lande nowe take it unto thee:
Give me the golde, good John o' the Scales,
And thine for aye my lande shall bee."

Then John he did him to record draw,
And John he cast him a gods-pennie;*
But for every pounde that John agreed,
The lande, i-wis, was well worth three.

He told him the gold upon the borde,
He was right glad his land to winne;
"The gold is thine, the land is mine,
And now Ile be the lord of Linne."

Thus he hath sold his land soe broad,
Both hill and holt, and moore and fenne,
All but a poore and lonesome lodge,
That stood far off in a lonely glenne.

For soe he to his father hight.
"My sonne, when I am gonne," said hee,
"Then thou wilt spend thy lande so broad,
And thou wilt spend thy gold so free.

"But sweare me nowe upon the roode,
That lonesome lodge thou'lt never spend;
For when all the world doth frown on thee,
Thou there shalt find a faithful friend."

* Earnest money; from the French *denier à Dieu*.

The heire of Linne is full of golde:
"And come with me, my friends," sayd hee,
"Let's drinke, and rant, and merry make,
And he that spares, ne'er mote he thee."

They ranted, drank, and merry made,
Till all his gold it waxed thinne;
And then his friendes they slunk away;
They left the unthrifty heire of Linne.

He had never a penny left in his purse,
Never a penny left but three,
And one was brass, another was lead,
And another it was white monèy.

"Nowe well-aday," sayd the heire of Linne,
"Nowe well-aday, and woe is mee,
For when I was the lord of Linne,
I never wanted gold nor fee.

"But many a trustye friend have I,
And why shold I feel dole or care?
Ile borrow of them all by turnes,
Soe need I not be never bare."

But one, i-wis, was not at home;
Another had payd his gold away;
Another call'd him thriftless loone,
And bade him sharpely wend his way.

"Now well-aday," sayd the heire of Linne,
"Now well-aday, and woe is me;
For when I had my landes so broad,
On me they liv'd right merrilee.

"To beg my bread from door to door,
I-wis, it were a brenning shame;
To rob and steal it were a sinne;
To worke, my limbs I cannot frame.

"Now Ile away to the lonesome lodge,
For there my father bade me wend:
When all the world should frown on mee,
I there shold find a trusty friend."

PART THE SECOND.

Away then hyed the heire of Linne,
Oer hill and holt, and moor and fenne,
Until he came to the lonesome lodge,
That stood so lowe in a lonely glenne.

He looked up, he looked downe,
In hope some comfort for to winne;
But bare and lothly were the walles;
"Here's sorry cheare," quo' the heire of Linne.

The little windowe, dim and darke,
Was hung with ivy, brere, and yewe;
No shimmering sunn here ever shone,
No halesome breeze here ever blew.

No chair, ne table he mote spye,
No chearful hearth, ne welcome bed,
Nought save a rope with renning noose,
That dangling hung up o'er his head.

And over it in broad lettèrs,
These words were written so plain to see:
"Ah! gracelesse wretch, hast spent thine all,
And brought thyselfe to penurie?

"All this my boding mind misgave,
I therefore left this trusty friend:
Let it now sheeld thy foule disgrace,
And all thy shame and sorrows end."

Sorely shent wi' this rebuke,
Sorely shent was the heire of Linne;
His heart, i-wis, was near to-brast
With guilt and sorrowe, shame and sinne.

Never a word spake the heire of Linne,
Never a word he spake but three:
"This is a trusty friend indeed,
And is right welcome unto mee."

Then round his necke the corde he drewe,
And sprang aloft with his bodie,
When lo! the ceiling burst in twaine,
And to the ground come tumbling hee.

Astonyed lay the heire of Linne,
Ne knewe if he were live or dead:
At length he looked, and sawe a bille,
And in it a key of gold so redd.

He took the bill, and lookt it on,
Strait good comfort found he there:
Itt told him of a hole in the wall,
In which there stood three chests in-fere.

Two were full of the beaten golde,
The third was full of white monèy;
And over them in broad lettèrs
These words were written so plaine to see.

"Once more, my sonne, I sette thee clere;'
Amend thy life and follies past;
For but thou amend thee of thy life,
That rope must be thy end at last."

"And let it bee," sayd the heire of Linne,
"And let it bee, but if I amend:
For here I will make mine avow,
This reade shall guide me to the end.'

Away then went with a merry cheare,
Away then went the heir of Linne;
I-wis, he neither ceas'd ne blanne,
Till John o' the Scales house he did winne.

And when he came to John o' the Scales,
Upp at the speere then looked hee;
There sate three lords upon a rowe,
Were drinking of the wine so free.

And John himselfe sate at the bord-head,
Because now lord of Linne was hee;
"I pray thee," he said, "good John o' the Scales,
"One forty pence for to lend mee."

"Away, away, thou thriftless loone;
Away, away, this may not bee:
For Christs curse on my head," he sayd,
"If ever I trust thee one penn'e."

Then bespake the heire of Linne,
To John o' the Scales wife then spake he:
"Madame, some almes on me bestowe,
I pray for sweet saint Charitie."

"Away, away, thou thriftless loone,
I swear thou gettest no almes of mee;
For if we should hang any losel heere,
The first we wold begin with thee."

Then bespake a good fellòwe,
Which sat at John o' the Scales his bord;
Sayd, "Turn againe, thou heir of Linne;
Some time thou wast a well good lord.

"Some time a good fellow thou hast been,
And sparedst not thy gold and fee;
Therefore Ile lend thee forty pence,
And other forty if need bee.

"And ever I pray thee, John o' the Scales,
To let him sit in thy companie:
For well I wot thou hadst his land,
And a good bargain it was to thee."

Up then spake him John o' the Scales,
All wood he answer'd him againe:
"Now Christs curse on my head," he sayd,
"But I did lose by that bargàine.

"And here I proffer thee, heire of Linne,
Before these lords so faire and free,
Thou shalt have it backe again better cheape
By a hundred markes than I had it of thee."

"I drawe you to record, lords," he said,
With that he cast him a gods-pennie:
"Now by my fay," sayd the heire of Linne,
"And here, good John, is thy monèy."

And he pull'd forth three bagges of gold,
And layd them down upon the bord;
All woe begone was John o' the Scales,
Soe shent he cold say never a word.

He told him forth the good red gold.
He told it forth with mickle dinne.
"The gold is thine, the land is mine,
And now Ime againe the lord of Linne."

Sayes, "Have thou here, thou good fellòwe,
Forty pence thou didst lend mee:
Now I am againe the lord of Linne,
And forty pounds I will give thee.

"Ile make thee keeper of my forrest,
Both of the wild deere and the tame;
For but I reward thy bounteous heart,
I-wis, good fellowe, I were to blame."

"Now welladay!" sayth Joan o' the Scales;
"Now welladay, and woe is my life!
Yesterday I was lady of Linne,
Now Ime but John o' the Scales his wife."

"Now fare thee well," sayd the heire of Linne,
"Farewell now, John o' the Scales," said hee:
"Christs curse light on mee, if ever again
I bring my lands in jeopardy."

THE OLD AND YOUNG COURTIER.

Reprinted from an ancient black-letter copy in the Pepys collection.

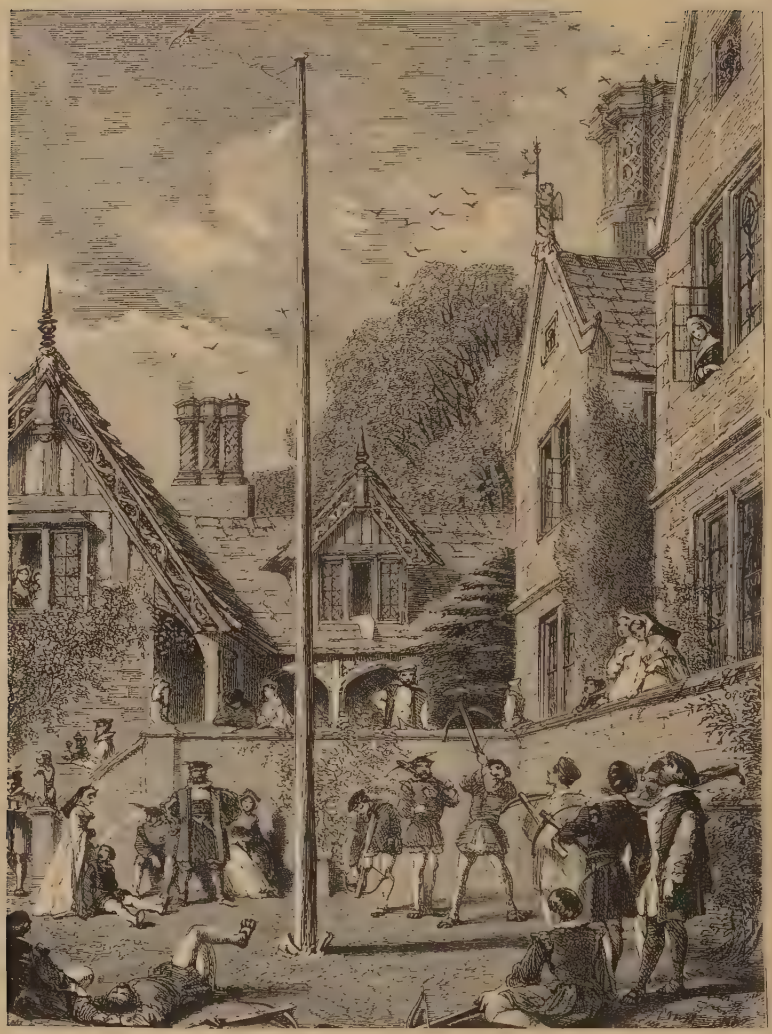
N old song made by an aged old pate,
Of an old worshipful gentleman, who had a greate estate,
That kept a brave old house at a bountiful rate,
And an old porter to relieve the poor at his gate;
Like an old courtier of the queen's,
And the queen's old courtier.

With an old lady, whose anger one word asswages;
They every quarter paid their old servants their wages,
And never knew what belong'd to coachmen, footmen, nor pages,
But kept twenty old fellows with blue coats and badges;

With an old study fill'd full of learned old books,
With an old reverend chaplain, you might know him by his looks.
With an old buttery hatch worn quite off the hooks,
And an old kitchen, that maintain'd half a dozen old cooks;

With an old hall, hung about with pikes, guns, and bows,
With old swords, and bucklers, that had borne many shrewde blows,
And an old frize coat, to cover his worship's trunk hose,
And a cup of old sherry, to comfort his copper nose;

With a good old fashion, when Christmasse was come,
To call in all his old neighbours with bagpipe and drum,
With good chear enough to furnish every old room,
And old liquor able to make a cat speak, and man dumb.



"That kept a brave old house at a bountiful rate."

With an old falconer, huntsman, and a kennel of hounds,
That never hawked, nor hunted, but in his own grounds,
Who, like a wise man, kept himself within his own bounds,
And when he dyed gave every child a thousand good pounds;

But to his eldest son his house and land he assign'd,
Charging him in his will to keep the old bountifull mind,
To be good to his old tenants, and to his neighbours be kind:
But in the ensuing ditty you shall hear how he was inclin'd;
Like a young courtier of the king's,
And the king's young courtier.

Like a flourishing young gallant, newly come to his land,
Who keeps a brace of painted madams at his command,
And takes up a thousand pound upon his father's land,
And gets drunk in a tavern, till he can neither go nor stand.

With a new-fangled lady, that is dainty, nice, and spare,
Who never knew what belong'd to good housekeeping, or care,
Who buyes gaudy-color'd fans to play with wanton air,
And seven or eight different dressings of other women's hair.

With a new-fashion'd hall, built where the old one stood,
Hung round with new pictures, that do the poor no good,
With a fine marble chimney, wherein burns neither coal nor wood,
And a new smooth shovelboard, whereon no victuals ne'er stood.

With a new study, stuft full of pamphlets, and plays,
And a new chaplain, that swears faster than he prays,
With a new buttery hatch, that opens once in four or five days,
And a new French cook, to devise fine kickshaws and toys.

With a new fashion, when Christmas is drawing on,
On a new journey to London straight we all must begone,
And leave none to keep house, but our new porter John,
Who relieves the poor with a thump on the back with a stone.

With a new gentleman-usher, whose carriage is compleat,
With a new coachman, footmen, and pages to carry up the meat,
With a waiting-gentlewoman, whose dressing is very neat,
Who when her lady has din'd, lets the servants not eat.

With new titles of honour bought with his father's old gold,
For which sundry of his ancestor's old manors are sold;
And this is the course most of our new gallants hold,
Which makes that good house-keeping is now grown so cold,
Among the young courtiers of the king,
Or the king's young courtiers.

VALENTINE AND URSINE.

" The old Story-book of 'Valentine and Orson,' which suggested the plan of this tale, but is not strictly followed in it, was originally a translation from a very early French Romance. The circumstance of the bridge of bells is taken from the metrical legend of 'Sir Bevis.' An old and mutilated poem in the folio MS. furnished some particulars."—PERCY.

PART THE FIRST.

WHEN Flora 'gins to decke the fields
With colours fresh and fine,
Then holy clerkes their mattins sing
To good Saint Valentine!

The king of France that morning fair
He would a hunting ride:
To Artois forest prancing forth
In all his princelye pride.

To grace his sports a courtly train
Of gallant peers attend:
And with their loud and cheerful cryes
The hills and valleys rend.

Through the deep forest swift they pass,
Through woods and thickets wild;
When down within a lonely dell
They found a new-born child;

All in a scarlet kercher lay'd
Of silk so fine and thin:
A golden mantle wrapt him round,
Pinn'd with a silver pin.

The sudden sight surpriz'd them all;
The courtiers gather'd round;
They look, they call, the mother seek;
No mother could be found.

At length the king himself drew near,
And as he gazing stands,
The pretty babe look'd up and smil'd,
And stretch'd his little hands.

Now, by the rood, king Pepin says,
This child is passing fair:
I wot he is of gentle blood;
Perhaps some prince's heir.

Goe bear him home unto my court
With all the care ye may:
Let him be christen'd Valentine,
In honour of this day:

And look me out some cunning nurse;
Well nurtur'd let him bee;
Nor ought be wanting that becomes
A bairn of high degree.

They look'd him out a cunning nurse,
And nurtur'd well was hee;
Nor aught was wanting that became
A bairn of high degree.

Thus grewe the little Valentine,
Belov'd of king and peers;
And shew'd in all he spake or did
A wit beyond his years.

But chief in gallant feates of arms
He did himself advance,
That ere he grewe to man's estate
He had no peere in France.

And now the early downe began
To shade his youthful chin;
When Valentine was dubb'd a knight,
That he might glory win.

A boon, a boon, my gracious liege,
I beg a boon of thee!
The first adventure that befalls,
May be reserv'd for mee.

The first adventure shall be thine;
The king did smiling say.
Nor many days, when lo! there came
Three palmers clad in graye.

Help, gracious lord, they weeping say'd;
And knelt, as it was meet:
From Artoys forest we be come,
With weak and wearye feet.

Within those deep and drearye woods
There wends a savage boy;
Whose fierce and mortal rage doth yield
Thy subjects dire annoy.

'Mong ruthless beares he sure was bred;
He lurks within their den:
With beares he lives; with beares he feeds,
And drinks the blood of men.

To more than savage strength he joins
A more than human skill:
For arms, ne cunning may suffice
His cruel rage to still:

Up then rose sir Valentine,
And claim'd that arduous deed.
Go forth and conquer, say'd the king,
And great shall be thy meed.

Well mounted on a milk-white steed,
His armour white as snow;
As well beseem'd a virgin knight,
Who ne'er had fought a foe:

To Artoys forest he repairs
With all the haste he may;
And soon he spies the savage youth
A rending of his prey.

His unkempt hair all matted hung
His shaggy shoulders round:
His eager eye all fiery glow'd:
His face with fury frown'd.

Like eagles' talons grew his nails:
His limbs were thick and strong;
And dreadful was the knotted oak
He bare with him along.

Soon as sir Valentine approach'd,
He starts with sudden spring;
And yelling forth a hideous howl,
He made the forests ring.

As when a tyger fierce and fell
Hath spyed a passing roe,
And leaps at once upon his throat;
So sprung the savage foe;

So lightly leap'd with furious force
The gentle knight to seize:
But met his tall uplifted spear,
Which sunk him on his knees.

A second stroke so stiff and stern
Had laid the savage low;
But springing up, he rais'd his club,
And aim'd a dreadful blow.

The watchful warrior bent his head,
And shun'd the coming stroke;
Upon his taper spear it fell,
And all to shivers broke.

Then lighting nimbly from his steed,
He drew his burnisht brand:
The savage quick as lightning flew
To wrest it from his hand.

Three times he grasp'd the silver hilt;
Three times he felt the blade;
Three times it fell with furious force;
Three ghastly wounds it made.

Now with redoubled rage he roar'd;
His eye-ball flash'd with fire;
Each hairy limb with fury shook;
And all his heart was ire.

Then closing fast with furious gripe
He clasp'd the champion round,
And with a strong and sudden twist
He laid him on the ground.

But soon the knight, with active spring,
O'erturn'd his hairy foe:
And now between their sturdy fists
Past many a bruising blow.

They roll'd and grappled on the ground,
And there they struggled long:
Skilful and active was the knight;
The savage he was strong.

But brutal force and savage strength
To art and skill must yield:
Sir Valentine at length prevail'd,
And won the well-fought field.

Then binding strait his conquer'd foe
Fast with an iron chain,
He tyes him to his horse's tail,
And leads him o'er the plain.

To court his hairy captive soon
Sir Valentine doth bring;
And kneeling downe upon his knee,
Presents him to the king.

With loss of blood and loss of strength
The savage tamer grew;
And to sir Valentine became
A servant try'd and true.

And 'cause with beares he erst was bred,
Ursine they call his name;
A name which unto future times
The Muses shall proclame.

PART THE SECOND.

In high renown with prince and peere
Now liv'd sir Valentine:
His high renown with prince and peere
Made envious hearts repine.

It chanc'd the king upon a day
Prepar'd a sumptuous feast:
And there came lords and dainty dames,
And many a noble guest.

Amid their cups, that freely flow'd,
Their revelry, and mirth,
A youthful knight tax'd Valentine
Of base and doubtful birth.

The foul reproach, so grossly urg'd,
His generous heart did wound:
And strait he vow'd he ne'er would rest
Till he his parents found.

Then bidding king and peers adieu,
Early one summer's day,
With faithful Ursine by his side,
From court he took his way.

O'er hill and valley, moss and moor,
For many a day they pass;
At length, upon a moated lake,*
They found a bridge of brass.

Beyond it rose a castle fair,
Y-built of marble stone:
The battlements were gilt with gold,
And glittred in the sun.

Beneath the bridge, with strange device,
A hundred bells were hung;
That man, nor beast, might pass thereon,
But strait their larum rung.

This quickly found the youthful pair,
Who boldly crossing o'er,
The jangling sound bedeaft their ears,
And rung from shore to shore.

Quick at the sound the castle gates
Unlock'd and opened wide,
And strait a gyant huge and grim
Stalk'd forth with stately pride.

Now yield you, caytiffs, to my will;
He cried with hideous roar;
Or else the wolves shall eat your flesh,
And ravens drink your gore.

Vain boaster, said the youthful knight,
I scorn thy threats and thee:
I trust to force thy brazen gates,
And set thy captives free.

* *i. e.* A lake that served for a moat to a castle.

Then putting spurs unto his steed,
He aim'd a dreadful thrust;
The spear against the gyant glanc'd,
And caus'd the blood to burst.

Mad and outrageous with the pain,
He whirl'd his mace of steel:
The very wind of such a blow
Had made the champion reel.

It haply mist; and now the knight
His glittering sword display'd,
And riding round with whirlwind speed
Oft made him feel the blade.

As when a large and monstrous oak
Unceasing axes hew:
So fast around the gyant's limbs
The blows quick-darting flew.

As when the boughs with hideous fall
Some hapless woodman crush:
With such a force the enormous foe
Did on the champion rush.

A fearful blow, alas! there came,
Both horse and knight it took,
And laid them senseless in the dust;
So fatal was the stroke.

Then smiling forth a hideous grin,
The gyant strides in haste,
And, stooping, aims a second stroke:
"Now caytiff breathe thy last!"

But ere it fell, two thundering blows
Upon his scull descend:
From Ursine's knotty club they came,
Who ran to save his friend.

Down sunk the gyant, gaping wide,
And rolling his grim eyes:
The hairy youth repeats his blows:
He gasps, he groans, he dies.

Quickly sir Valentine reviv'd
With Ursine's timely care:
And now to search the castle walls
The venturous youths repair.

The blood and bones of murder'd knights
They found where'er they came:
At length within a lonely cell
They saw a mournful dame.

Her gentle eyes were dim'd with tears;
Her cheeks were pale with woe:
And long sir Valentine besought
Her doleful tale to know.

"Alas! young knight," she weeping said,
"Condole my wretched fate;
A childless mother here you see;
A wife without a mate.

"These twenty winters here forlorn
I've drawn my hated breath;
Sole witness of a monster's crimes,
And wishing aye for death.

"Know, I am sister of a king,
And in my early years
Was married to a mighty prince,
The fairest of his peers.

"With him I sweetly liv'd in love
A twelvemonth and a day:
When, lo! a foul and treacherous priest
Y-wrought our loves' decay.

"His seeming goodness wan him pow'r;
He had his master's ear:
And long to me and all the world
He did a saint appear.

"One day, when we were all alone,
He proffer'd odious love:
The wretch with horrour I repuls'd,
And from my presence drove.

"He feign'd remorse, and piteous beg'd
His crime I'd not reveal:
Which, for his seeming penitence,
I promis'd to conceal.

"With treason, villainy, and wrong,
My goodness he repay'd:
With jealous doubts he fill'd my lord,
And me to woe betray'd.

"He hid a slave within my bed,
Then rais'd a bitter cry.
My lord, possest with rage, condemn'd
Me, all unheard, to dye.

"But, 'cause I then was great with child,
At length my life he spar'd:
But bade me instant quit the realme,
One trusty knight my guard.

"Forth on my journey I depart,
Opprest with grief and woe;
And tow'rds my brother's distant court,
With breaking heart, I goe.

"Long time thro' sundry foreign lands
We slowly pace along:
At length, within a forest wild,
I fell in labour strong:

"And while the knight for succour sought,
And left me there forlorn,
My childbed pains so fast increast,
Two lovely boys were born.

"The eldest fair, and smooth, as snow
That tips the mountain hoar:
The younger's little body rough
With hairs was cover'd o'er.

"But here afresh begin my woes:
While tender care I took
To shield my eldest from the cold,
And wrap him in my cloak,

"A prowling bear burst from the wood,
And seiz'd my younger son:
Affection lent my weakness wings,
And after them I run.

"But all forewearied, weak, and spent,
I quickly swoon'd away;
And there beneath the greenwood shade
Long time I lifeless lay.

"At length the knight brought me relief,
And rais'd me from the ground:
But neither of my pretty babes
Could ever more be found.

"And, while in search we wander'd far,
We met that gyant grim;
Who ruthless slew my trusty knight,
And bare me off with him.

"But charm'd by heav'n, or else my griefs,
He offer'd me no wrong;
Save that within these lonely walls
I've been immur'd so long."

"Now, surely," said the youthful knight,
"You are lady Ballisance,
Wife to the Grecian Emperor:
Your brother's king of France.

"For in your royal brother's court
Myself my breeding had;
Where oft the story of your woes
Hath made my bosom sad.

"If so, know your accuser's dead,
And dying own'd his crime;
And long your lord hath sought you out
Thro' every foreign clime.

"And when no tidings he could learn
Of his much-wrongèd wife,
He vow'd thenceforth within his court
To lead a hermit's life."

"Now heaven is kind!" the lady said;
And dropt a joyful tear:
"Shall I once more behold my lord?
That lord I love so dear?"

'But, madam," said sir Valentine,
And knelt upon his knee;
"Know you the cloak that wrapt your babe,
If you the same should see?"

And pulling forth the cloth of gold,
In which himself was found;
The lady gave a sudden shriek,
And fainted on the ground.

But by his pious care reviv'd,
His tale she heard anon;
And soon by other tokens found,
He was indeed her son.

"But who's this hairy youth?" she said;
"He much resembles thee:
The bear devour'd my younger son,
Or sure that son were he."

"Madam, this youth with bears was bred,
And rear'd within their den.
But recollect ye any mark
To know your son agen?"

"Upon his little side," quoth she,
Was stampt a bloody rose.
"Here, lady, see the crimson mark
Upon his body grows!"

Then clasping both her new-found sons
She bath'd their cheeks with tears;
And soon towards her brother's court
Her joyful course she steers.

What pen can paint king Pepin's joy,
His sister thus restor'd!
And soon a messenger was sent
To chear her drooping lord:

Who came in haste with all his peers,
To fetch her home to Greece;
Where many happy years they reign'd
In perfect love and peace.

To them sir Ursine did succeed,
And long the scepter bare.
Sir Valentine he stay'd in France,
And was his uncle's heir.

THE FAIRIES' FAREWELL.

BY BISHOP CORBET.

AREWELL rewards and Fairies!
Good housewives now may say;
For now foule sluts in dairies
Doe fare as well as they:
And though they sweepe their hearths no less
Than mayds were wont to doe,
Yet who of late for cleaneliness
Finds sixe-pence in her shoe?

Lament, lament, old Abbies,
The fairies' lost command;
They did but change priests' babies,
But some have chang'd your land:
And all your children stoln from thence
Are now growne Puritanes,
Who live as changelings ever since,
For love of your demaines.

At morning and at evening both
You merry were and glad;
So little care of sleepe and sloth
These prettie ladies had.
When Tom came home from labour,
Or Ciss to milking rose,
Then merrily went their tabour,
And nimbly went their toes.

Witness those rings and roundelayes
Of theirs, which yet remaine;
Were footed in queene Marie's dayes
On many a grassy playne.
But since of late Elizabeth
And later James came in;

"Lament, lament, old Abbies."

They never danc'd on any heath,
As when the time hath bin.

By which wee note the fairies
Were of the old profession:
Their songs were *Ave Maries*,
Their dances were procession.
But now, alas! they all are dead,
Or gone beyond the seas,
Or farther for religion fled,
Or else they take their ease.

A tell-tale in their company
They never could endure;
And whoso kept not secretly
Their mirth, was punish'd sure:
It was a just and christian deed
To pinch such blacke and blue:
O how the common-welth doth need
Such justices as you!

Now they have left our quarters;
A Register they have,
Who can preserve their charters;
A man both wise and grave.
An hundred of their merry pranks
By one that I could name
Are kept in store; con twenty thanks
To William for the same.

To William Churne of Staffordshire
Give laud and praises due,
Who every meale can mend your cheare
With tales both old and true:
To William all give audience,
And pray yee for his noddle:
For all the fairies' evidence
Were lost, if it were addle.

THE BLIND BEGGAR'S DAUGHTER OF BEDNALL GREEN.

The copy here given of this favourite popular ballad is printed from a modern broadside, "carefully collated," with a copy in the Bagford collection.

"Pepys, in his diary, 25th June, 1663, speaks of going with Sir William and Lady Batten, and Sir J. Minnes, to Sir W. Rider's at Bednall Green, to dinner, 'a fine place;' and adds, 'This very house was built by the blind beggar of Bednall Green, so much talked of and sung in ballads; but they say it was only some outhouses of it.'"—CHAPPELL.

THIS song's of a beggar who long lost sight,
And had a fair daughter, most pleasant and bright;
And many a gallant brave suitor had she,
And none was so comely as pretty Bessee.

And though she was of complexion most fair,
Yet seeing she was but a beggar his heir,
Of ancient housekeepers despised was she,
Whose sons came as suitors to pretty Bessee.

Wherefore in great sorrow fair Bessee did say,
"Good father and mother, let me now go away,
To seek out my fortune, whatever it be;"
This suit then was granted to pretty Bessee.

This Bessee, that was of a beauty most bright,
They clad in gray russet, and late in the night
From father and mother alone parted she,
Who sighed and sobbed for pretty Bessee.

She went till she came to Stratford-a-Bow,
Then she knew not whither or which way to go;
With tears she lamented her sad destiny,
So sad and so heavy was pretty Bessee.

She kept on her journey until it was day,
And went unto Rumford along the highway;
And at the King's Arms entertained was she,
So fair and well-favoured was pretty Bessee.

She had not been there one month at an end,
But master and mistress and all was her friend;
And every brave gallant that once did her see
Was straightway in love with pretty Bessee.

Great gifts they did send her in silver and gold,
And in their songs daily her love they extoll'd;
Her beauty was blazed in every degree,
So fair and so comely was pretty Bessee.

The young men of Rumford in her had their joy;
She shewed herself courteous, but never too coy,
And at their commandment still she would be,
So fair and so comely was pretty Bessee.

Four suitors at once unto her did go,
They craved her favour, but still she said no;
"I would not have gentlemen marry with me,"—
Yet ever they honoured pretty Bessee.

Now one of them was a gallant young knight,
And he came unto her disguised in the night;
The second, a gentleman of high degree,
Who wooed and sued for pretty Bessee.

A merchant of London, whose wealth was not small,
Was then the third suitor, and proper withal;
Her master's own son the fourth man must be,
Who swore he would die for pretty Bessee.

"If that thou wilt marry with me," quoth the knight,
"I'll make thee a lady with joy and delight;
My heart is enthralled in thy fair beauty,
Then grant me thy favour, my pretty Bessee."

The gentleman said, "Come marry with me,
In silks and in velvets my Bessee shall be;
My heart lies distracted, oh hear me!" quoth he,
"And grant me thy love, my dear pretty Bessee."

"Let me be thy husband," the merchant did say,
"Thou shalt live in London most gallant and gay;
My ships shall bring home rich jewels for thee,
And I will for ever love pretty Bessee."

Then Bessee she sighed, and thus she did say;
"My father and mother I mean to obey;
First get their goodwill, and be faithful to me,
And you shall enjoy your dear pretty Bessee."

To every one of them that answer she made;
Therefore unto her they joyfully said,
"This thing to fulfill we all now agree;
But where dwells thy father, my pretty Bessee?"

"My father," quoth she, "is soon to be seen;
The silly blind beggar of Bednall Green,
That daily sits begging for charity,
He is the kind father of pretty Bessee.

"His marks and his token are knowen full well;
He always is led by a dog and a bell;
A poor silly old man, God knoweth, is he,
Yet he is the true father of pretty Bessee."

"Nay, nay," quoth the merchant, "thou art not for me;"
"She," quoth the innholder, "my wife shall not be;"
"I loathe," said the gentleman, "a beggars degree,
Therefore, now farewell, my pretty Bessee."

"Why then," quoth the knight, "happ better or worse,
I weigh not true love by the weight of the purse,
And beauty is beauty in every degree;
Then welcome to me, my dear pretty Bessee."

"With thee to thy father forthwith I will go."
"Nay, forbear," quoth his kinsman, "it must not be so:
A poor beggars daughter a lady sha'nt be;
Then take thy adieu of thy pretty Bessee.

As soon then as it was break of the day,
The knight had from Rumford stole Bessee away;
The young men of Rumford, so sick as may be,
Rode after to fetch again pretty Bessee.

As swift as the wind to ride they were seen,
Until they came near unto Bednall Green,
And as the knight lighted most courteously,
They fought against him for pretty Bessee.

But rescue came presently over the plain,
Or else the knight there for his love had been slain;
The fray being ended, they straightway did see
His kinsman come railing at pretty Bessee.

Then bespoke the Blind Beggar, "Altho' I be poor,
Rail not against my child at my own door;
Though she be not decked in velvet and pearl,
Yet I will drop angels with thee for my girl;

"And then if my gold should better her birth,
And equal the gold you lay on the earth,
Then neither rail you, nor grudge you to see
The Blind Beggars daughter a lady to be.

"But first, I will hear, and have it well known,
The gold that you drop it shall be all you own;"
"With that," they replied, "contented we be;"
"Then heres," quoth the beggar, "for pretty Bessee."

With that an angel he dropped on the ground,
And dropped, in angels, full three thousand pound;
And oftentimes it proved most plain,
For the gentlemans one, the beggar dropped twain.

So that the whole place wherein they did sit
With gold was covered every whit;
The gentleman having dropt all his store,
Said, "Beggar, your hand hold, for I have no more.

"Thou hast fulfilled thy promise aright;"
"Then marry my girl," quoth he to the knight;
"And then," quoth he, "I will throw you down,
An hundred pound more to buy her a gown."

The gentlemen all, who his treasure had seen,
Admired the Beggar of Bednall Green.
And those that had been her suitors before,
Their tender flesh for anger they tore.

Thus was fair Bessee matched to a knight,
And made a lady in others despite:
A fairer lady there never was seen
Than the Blind Beggars daughter of Bednall Green.

But of her sumptuous marriage and feast,
And what fine lords and ladies there prest,
The second part shall set forth to your sight,
With marvellous pleasure, and wished for delight.

PART II.

Of a blind beggars daughter so bright,
That late was betrothed to a young knight,
All the whole discourse thereof you did see,
But now comes the wedding of pretty Bessee.

It was in a gallant palace most brave,
Adorned with all the cost they could have,
This wedding it was kept most sumptuously,
And all for the love of pretty Bessee.

And all kind of dainties and delicates sweet
Was brought to their banquet, as it was thought meet;
Partridge, and plover, and venison most free,
Against the brave wedding of pretty Bessee.

The wedding thro' England was spread by report,
So that a great number thereto did resort,
Of nobles and gentles of every degree,
And all for the fame of pretty Bessee.

To church then away went this gallant young knight,
His bride followed after, an angel most bright,
With troops of ladies, the like was ne'er seen,
As went with sweet Bessee of Bednall Green.

This wedding being solemnized then,
With music performed by skilfullest men,
The nobles and gentles sat down at that tide,
Each one beholding the beautiful bride.

But after the sumptuous dinner was done,
To talk and to reason a number begun,
And of the Blind Beggars daughter most bright,
And what with his daughter he gave to the knight.

Then spoke the nobles, "Much marvel have we
This jolly blind beggar we cannot yet see!"
"My lords," quoth the bride, "my father so base
Is loathe with his presence these states to disgrace."

"The praise of a woman in question to bring,
Before her own face, is a flattering thing;
But we think thy fathers baseness," quoth they,
"Might by thy beauty be clean put away."

They no sooner this pleasant word spoke,
But in comes the beggar in a silken cloak,
A velvet cap and a feather had he,
And now a musician, forsooth, he would be.

And being led in, from catching of harm,
He had a dainty lute under his arm;
Said, "Please you to hear any music of me,
A song I will give you of pretty Bessee."

With that his lute he twanged straightway,
And thereon began most sweetly to play,
And after a lesson was played two or three,
He strained out this song most delicately:—

"A beggars daughter did dwell on a green,
Who for her beauty might well be a queen,
A blythe bonny lass, and dainty was she,
And many one called her pretty Bessee.

"Her father he had no goods nor no lands,
But begged for a penny all day with his hands,
And yet for her marriage gave thousands three,
Yet still he hath somewhat for pretty Bessee.

"And here if any one do her disdain,
Her father is ready with might and with main,
To prove she is come of noble degree,
Therefore let none flout at my pretty Bessee."

With that the lords and the company round
With a hearty laughter were ready to swound;
At last said the lords, "Full well we may see,
The bride and the bridegroom's beholden to thee."

With that the fair bride all blushing did rise,
With chrystal water all in her bright eyes;
"Pardon my father, brave nobles," quoth she,
"That through blind affection thus doats upon me."

"If this be thy father," the nobles did say,
"Well may he be proud of this happy day,
Yet by his countenance well may we see,
His birth with his fortune could never agree.

"And therefore, blind beggar, we pray thee bewray,
And look that the truth to us thou dost say,
Thy birth and thy parentage what it may be,
E'en for the love thou bearest to pretty Bessee."

"Then give me leave, ye gentles each one,
A song more to sing and then I'll begone;
And if that I do not win good report,
Then do not give me one groat for my sport:—

"When first our king his fame did advance,
And sought his title in delicate France,
In many places great perils past he,
But then was not born my pretty Bessee.

"And at those wars went over to fight,
Many a brave duke, a lord, and a knight,
And with them young Monford of courage so free,
But then was not born my pretty Bessee.

"And there did young Monford with a blow on the face
Lose both his eyes in a very short space;
His life had been gone away with his sight,
Had not a young woman gone forth in the night.

"Among the slain men, her fancy did move
To search and to seek for her own true love,
Who seeing young Monford there gasping to die,
She saved his life through her charity.

"And then all our victuals in beggars attire,
At the hands of good people we then did require;
At last into England, as now it is seen
We came, and remained in Bednall Green.

"And thus we have lived in Fortune's despyght,
Though poor, yet contented, with humble delight,
And in my old years, a comfort to me,
God sent me a daughter, called pretty Bessee.

"And thus, ye nobles, my song I do end,
Hoping by the same no man to offend;
Full forty long winters thus I have been,
A silly blind beggar of Bednall Green."

Now when the company every one
Did hear the strange tale he told in his song,
They were amazed, as well as they might be,
Both at the blind beggar and pretty Bessee.

With that the fair bride they all did embrace,
Saying, "You are come from an honourable race;
Thy father likewise is of high degree,
And thou art right worthy a lady to be."

Thus was the feast ended with joy and delight;
A happy bridegroom was made the young knight,
Who lived in great joy and felicity,
With his fair lady, dear pretty Bessee.

GOOD ALE.

The comedy of "Gammer Gurton's Needle," in which this song appears, was first acted in 1566, *but not printed until* 1575. *"It is believed to have been," says Mr. Ellis, in his 'Specimens of Ancient English Poetry,' "the earliest English drama that exhibited any approaches to regular comedy." "The music," says Ritson, "was set four parts in one, by Mr. Walker, before the year* 1600."

By John Still, Bishop of Bath and Wells, who died in 1607.

CANNOT eat but little meat,
My stomach is not good;
But sure, I think that I can drink
With any that wears a hood.
Though I go bare, take ye no care,
I am nothing a-cold;
I stuff my skin so full within
Of jolly good ale and old.
Back and side go bare, go bare,—
Both foot and hand go cold;
But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

I love no roast but a nut-brown toast,
And a crab laid in the fire;
A little bread shall do me stead,—
Much bread I don't desire.
No frost, no snow, no wind I trow
Can hurt me if I wold;
I am so wrapt and thoroughly lapt
Of jolly good ale and old.
Back and side go bare, go bare,—
Both foot and hand go cold;
But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

Bringing in dinner in old Hall.

And Tib my wife, that as her life
Loveth well good ale to seek,
Full oft drinks she till you may see
The tears run down her cheek;
Then doth she troul to me the bowl,
Even as a maltworm should,
And saith, "Sweetheart, I take my part
Of this jolly good ale and old."
Back and side go bare, go bare,—
Both foot and hand go cold;
But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

Now let them drink till they nod and wink,
Even as good fellows should do;
They shall not miss to have the bliss
Good ale doth bring men to;
And all poor souls that have scour'd bowls,
Or have them lustily troul'd,
God save the lives of them and their wives,
Whether they be young or old.
Back and side go bare, go bare,—
Both foot and hand go cold;
But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

FAIR ROSAMOND.

By Thomas Deloney, a celebrated ballad maker, who died about the year 1600. Reprinted from the "Crown Garland of Golden Roses."

HEN as King Henrie rul'd this land,
The Second of that name,
Beside the Queene, he dearly loved
A faire and princely dame.
Most peerelesse was her beautie found,
Her favour, and her face;
A sweeter creature in this world
Did never prince imbrace.

Her crisped locks like threades of gold
Appeared to each mans sight;
Her comely eyes, like orient pearles,
Did cast a heavenly light.
The blood within her cristall cheekes
Did such a cullour drive,
As though the lilly and the rose
For maistership did strive.

Yea Rosamond, fair Rosamond,
Her name was called so,
To whome dame Elinor our queene,
Was knowne a cruell foe.
The king therefore, for her defence
Against the furious queene,
At Woodstocke buylded such a bower,
The like was never seene.

Most curiously that bower was buylt,
Of stone and timber strong;
A hundred and fiftie doores
Did to that bower belong:
And they so cunningly contriv'd,
With turning round about,
That none but by a clew of thread
Could enter in or out.

And for his love and ladyes sake,
That was so fair and bright,
The keeping of this bower he gave
Unto a valiant knight.
But fortune, that doth often frowne
Where she before did smile,
The kinges delight, the ladyes joy
Full soone she did beguile.

For why, the kings ungracious sonne,
Whom he did high advance,
Against his father raised warres
Within the realme of France.
But yet before our comely king
The English land forsooke,
Of Rosamond, his ladye faire,
His farewell thus he tooke:

"My Rosamond, my onely Rose,
That pleaseth best mine eye,
The fairest Rose in all the world
To feed my fantasie,—
The flower of my affected heart,
Whose sweetness doth excell,
My royall Rose, a hundred times
I bid thee now farewell!

" For I must leave my fairest flower,
My sweetest Rose, a space,
And crosse the seas to famous France,
Proude rebels to abace.
But yet, my Rose, be sure thou shalt
My comming shortly see,
And in my heart, while hence I am,
Ile bear my Rose with mee."

When Rosamond, that lady bright,
Did heare the king say so,
The sorrow of her greeved heart
Her outward lookes did show.
And from her clear and cristall eyes
The teares gusht out apace,
Which, like the silver-pearled deaw,
Ran downe her comely face.

Her lippes, like to a corrall red,
Did waxe both wan and pale,
And for the sorrow she conceived
Her vitall spirits did fayle.
And falling downe all in a swound
Before King Henries face,
Full oft betweene his princely armes
Her corpes he did imbrace.

And twenty times, with waterie eyes,
He kist her tender cheeke,
Untill she had received againe
Her senses milde and meeke.
" Why grieves my Rose, my sweetest Rose?"
The king did ever say:
" Because," quoth she, " to bloody warres
My lord must part away.

" But sithe your Grace in forraine coastes,
Among your foes unkind,
Must go to hazard life and limme,
Why should I stay behind?
" Nay, rather let me, like a page,
Your sword and target beare;
That on my breast the blow may light,
Which should annoy you there.

" O let me, in your royall tent,
Prepare your bed at night,
And with sweet baths refresh your grace,
At your returne from fight.
So I your presence may enjoy,
No toyle I will refuse;
But wanting you, my life is death:
Which doth true love abuse."

" Content thy selfe, my dearest friend,
Thy rest at home shall bee,
In England's sweete and pleasant soyle;
For travaile fits not thee.
Faire ladyes brooke not bloody warres;
Sweete peace their pleasures breede,
The nourisher of hearts content,
Which fancie first doth feede.

" My Rose shall rest in Woodstocke bower,
With musickes sweete delight,
While I among the pierceing pikes
Against my foes do fight.
My Rose in robes of pearl and gold,
With diamonds richly dight,
Shall daunce the galliards of my love,
While I my foes do smite.

"And you, Sir Thomas, whom I trust
To be my loves defence,
Be careful of my gallant Rose
When I am parted hence."
And therewithall he fetcht a sigh,
As though his heart would breake:
And Rosamond, for inward griefe,
Not one plaine word could speake.

And at their parting well they might
In heart be grieved sore:
After that day, faire Rosamond
The King did see no more.
For when his Grace had past the seas,
And into France was gone,
Queene Elinor, with envious heart,
To Woodstocke came anone.

And foorth she cald this trusty knight
Which kept the curious bower,
Who, with his clew of twined threed,
Came from that famous flower.
And when that they had wounded him,
The queene his threed did get,
And went where lady Rosamond
Was like an angell set.

And when the queene with stedfast eye
Beheld her heavenly face,
She was amazed in her minde
At her exceeding grace.
"Cast off from thee thy robes," she sayd,
"That rich and costly be;
And drinke thou up this deadly draught,
Which I have brought for thee."

But presently upon her knees
Sweet Rosamond did fall;
And pardon of the queene she crav'd
For her offences all.

"Take pittie on my youthfull yeares,"
Faire Rosamond did cry;
"And let me not with poyson strong
Inforcèd be to die.

"I will renounce this sinfull life,
And in a cloyster bide;
Or else be banisht, if you please,
To range the world so wide.
And for the fault which I have done,
Though I was forst thereto,
Preserve my life, and punish me
As you thinke good to do."

And with these words, her lillyhands
She wrang full often there;
And downe along her lovely cheekes
Proceeded many a teare.
But nothing could this furious queene
Therewith appeased bee;
The cup of deadly poyson fill'd
As she sat on her knee,

She gave the comely dame to drinke;
Who tooke it in her hand,
And from her bended knee arose,
And on her feet did stand.
And casting up her eyes to heaven,
She did for mercy call;
And drinking up the poyson then,
Her life she lost withall.

And when that death through every lim
Had done his greatest spite,
Her chiefest foes did plaine confesse
She was a glorious wight.
Her body then they did intombe,
When life was fled away,
At Godstow, neere to Oxford towne,
As may be seene this day.

THE PRAISE OF A COUNTRYMAN'S LIFE.

JOHN CHALKILL. *From Walton's "Angler,"* 1653.

H, the sweet contentment
The countryman doth find,
High trololliе, lollie, lol; high trololliе, lee;
That quiet contemplation
Possesseth all my mind:
Then care away, and wend along with me.

For courts are full of flattery,
As hath too oft been tried,
High trololliе, lollie, lol; high trololliе, lee;
The city full of wantonness,
And both are full of pride:
Then care away, and wend along with me.

But, oh! the honest countryman
Speaks truly from his heart,
High trololliе, lollie, lol; high trololliе, lee
His pride is in his tillage,
His horses and his cart:
Then care away, and wend along with me.

Our clothing is good sheep-skins,
Grey russet for our wives,
High trololliе, lollie, lol; high trololliе, lee;
'Tis warmth and not gay clothing
That doth prolong our lives:
Then care away, and wend along with me.

"The happiness the countryman enjoys."

The ploughman, though he labour hard,
Yet on the holy day,
High trololliе, lollie, lol; high trololliе, lee;
No emperor so merrily
Does pass his time away:
Then care away, and wend along with me.

To recompense our tillage
The heavens afford us showers,
High trololliе, lollie, lol; high trololliе, lee;
And for our sweet refreshments
The earth affords us bowers:
Then care away, and wend along with me.

The cuckoo and the nightingale
Full merrily do sing,
High trololliе, lollie, lol; high trololliе, lee;
And with their pleasant roundelays
Bid welcome to the spring:
Then care away, and wend along with me.

This is not half the happiness
The countryman enjoys,
High trololliе, lollie, lol; high trololliе, lee:
Though others think they have as much,
Yet he that says so lies:
Then care away, and wend along with me.

PATIENT GRISSEL.

The story of Griselda was first told in the Decameron. Boccaccio derived the incidents from Petrarch, and Petrarch seems to have communicated them also to Chaucer, who (in his "Clerk of Oxenford's Tale") first made known the tale to English readers. The ballad here given is taken from Thomas Deloney's "Garland of Good Will," a collection which was printed some time before 1596.

NOBLE marquess, as he did ride a-hunting,
Hard by a river side,
A proper maiden, as she did sit a-spinning,
His gentle eye espy'd:
Most fair and lovely, and of comely grace was she,
Although in simple attire;
She sang most sweetly, with pleasant voice melodiously
Which set the lord's heart on fire.
The more he lookt, the more he might;
Beauty bred his heart's delight,
And to this damsel he went.
"God speed," quoth he, "thou famous flower,
Fair mistress of this homely bower,
Where love and vertue live with sweet content."

With comely gesture and modest mild behaviour
She bad him welcome then;
She entertain'd him in a friendly manner,
And all his gentlemen.
The noble marquess in his heart felt such flame
Which set his senses all at strife;
Quoth he, "Fair maiden, shew soon what is thy name:
I mean to take thee to my wife."

"Grissel is my name," quoth she,
"Far unfit for your degree;
A silly maiden, and of parents poor."
"Nay, Grissel, thou art rich," he said,
"A vertuous, fair, and comely maid;
Grant me thy love, and I will ask no more."

At length she consented, and being both contented,
They married were with speed;
Her country russet was turned to silk and velvet,
As to her state agreed:
And when that she was trimly attired in the same,
Her beauty shin'd most bright,
Far staining every other brave and comely dame
That did appear in sight.
Many envied her therefore,
Because she was of parents poor,
And twixt her lord and her great strife did raise:
Some said this, and some said that,
Some did call her beggars brat,
And to her lord they would her oft dispraise.

"O noble marquess," quoth they, "why do you wrong us,
Thus basely for to wed,
That might have got an honourable lady
Into your princely bed?
Who will not now your noble issue still deride,
Which shall be hereafter born,
That are of blood so base by the mother's side,
The which will bring them to scorn?
Put her, therefore, quite away;
Take to you a lady gay,
Whereby your lineage may renownèd be."
Thus every day they seemed to prate
At malic'd Grissel's good estate,
Who took all this most mild and patiently.

When that the marquess did see they were bent thus
  Against his faithful wife,
Whom most dearly, tenderly, and intirely
  He loved as his life;
Minding in secret for to prove her patient heart,
  Thereby her foes to disgrace;
Thinking to play a hard discourteous part,
  That men might pity her case,—
Great with child this lady was,
And at length it came to pass,
  Two lovely children at one birth she had;
A son and daughter God had sent,
Which did their father well content,
  And which did make their mothers heart full glad.

Great royal feasting was at the childrens christ'ning,
  And princely triumph made;
Six weeks together, all nobles that came thither
  Were entertain'd and staid.
And when that these pleasant sportings were quite done,
  The marquess a messenger sent
For his young daughter and his pretty smiling son,
  Declaring his full intent,
How that the babes must murthered be,
For so the marquess did decree.
  "Come, let me have the children," he said:
With that fair Grissel wept full sore,
She wrung her hands and said no more;
  "My gracious lord must have his will obey'd."

She took the babies from the nursing-ladies,
  Between her tender arms;
She often wishes, with many sorrowful kisses,
  That she might help their harms.
Farewel," quoth she, "my children dear;
  Never shall I see you again;

'Tis long of me, your sad and woful mother dear,
For whose sake you must be slain.
Had I been born of royal race,
You might have lived in happy case;

But now you must die for my unworthiness.
"Come, messenger of death," quoth she,
"Take my despised babes to thee,
And to their father my complaints express."

He took the children, and to his noble master
He brought them forth with speed;
Who secretly sent them unto a noble lady,
To be nurst up indeed.
Then to fair Grissel with a heavy heart he goes,
Where she sat mildly all alone;
A pleasant gesture and a lovely look she shows,
As if grief she had never known.
Quoth he, "My children now are slain;
What thinks fair Grissel of the same?
Sweet Grissel, now declare thy mind to me."
"Since you, my lord, are pleas'd with it,
Poor Grissel thinks the action fit;
Both I and mine at your command will be."

"The nobles murmur, fair Grissel, at thine honour,
And I no joy can have
Till thou be banisht from my court and presence,
As they unjustly crave.
Thou must be stript out of thy stately garments;
And as thou camest to me,
In homely gray, instead of silk and purest pall,
Now all thy cloathing must be.
My lady thou must be no more,
Nor I thy lord, which grieves me sore;
The poorest life must now content thy mind:
A groat to thee I may not give,
Thee to maintain, while I do live;
'Gainst my Grissel such great foes I find."

When gentle Grissel heard these woful tidings,
The tears stood in her eyes;
She nothing said, no words of discontentment
Did from her lips arise.
Her velvet gown most patiently she stript off,
Her girdle of silk with the same;
Her russet gown was brought again with many a scoff;

To bear them all, herself [she] did frame.
When she was drest in this array,
And ready was to part away,
"God send long life unto my lord," quoth she
"Let no offence be found in this,
To give my lord a parting kiss."
With wat'ry eyes, "Farewel, my dear!" quoth he.

From stately palace, unto her father's cottage,
Poor Grissel now is gone;
Full fifteen winters she lived there contented,
No wrong she thought upon;
And at that time thro' all the land the speeches went,
The marquess should married be
Unto a noble lady of high descent,
And to the same all parties did agree.
The marquess sent for Grissel fair
The bride's bed-chamber to prepare,
That nothing should therein be found awry;
The bride was with her brother come,
Which was great joy to all and some;
And Grissel took all this most patiently.

And in the morning when that they should be wedded,
Her patience now was try'd;
Grissel was charged in princely manner
For to attire the bride.
Most willingly she gave consent unto the same
The bride in her bravery was drest,
And presently the noble marquess thither came,
With all the ladies at his request.
"Oh Grissel, I would ask of thee
If to this match thou wouldst agree?
Methinks thy looks are waxed wondrous coy."
With that they all began to smile,
And Grissel she replies the while,
"God send lord marquess many years of joy."

The marquis was movèd to see his best belovèd
Thus patient in distress;
He stept unto her, and by the hand he took her;
These words he did express:
"Thou art the bride, and all the brides I mean to have;
These two thy own children be."
The youthful lady on her knees did blessing crave,
The brother as willing as she.
"And you that envy her estate,
Whom I have made my loving mate,
Now blush for shame and honour vertuous life;
The chronicles of lasting fame
Shall evermore extol the name
Of patient Grissel, my most constant wife."

COME TO THE MAY-POLE.

Reprinted from Westminster Drollery.

COME, lasses and lads, get leave of your dads,
And away to the May-pole hie,
For every fair has a sweetheart there.
And the fiddler's standing by.

For Willy shall dance with Jane,
And Johnny has got his Joan,
To trip it, trip it, trip it, trip it,
Trip it up and down.

Strike up, says Watt: agreed, says Matt,
And I prithee, fiddler, play;
Content, says Hodge, and so says Madge,
For this is a holiday.
Then every lad did doff
His hat unto his lass,
And every girl did curtsey, curtsey,
Curtsey on the grass.

Begin, says Hal: aye, aye, says Mall,
We'll lead up *Packington's Pound;*
No, no, says Noll, and so says Doll,
We'll first have *Sellinger's Round.*
Then every man began
To foot it round about,
And every girl did jet it, jet it,
Jet it in and out.

You're out, says Dick—not I, says Nick,
'Twas the fiddler play'd it wrong;
'Tis true, says Hugh, and so says Sue,
And so says every one.
The fiddler then began
To play the tune again,
And every girl did trip it, trip it,
Trip it to the men.

Let's kiss, says Jane,—content, says Nan,
And so says every she:
How many? says Batt,—why three, says Matt,
For that's a maiden's fee.

"Away to the May-pole hie."

The men instead of three,
Did give them half-a-score;
The maids in kindness, kindness, kindness,
Gave 'em as many more.

Then, after an hour, they went to a bow'r,
And play'd for ale and cakes;
And kisses too—until they were due
The lasses held the stakes.
The girls then did begin
To quarrel with the men,
And bade them take their kisses back,
And give them their own again.

Now there they did stay the whole of the day,
And tired the fiddler quite
With dancing and play, without any pay,
From morning until night.
They told the fiddler then
They'd pay him for his play,
Then each a twopence, twopence, twopence,
Gave him and went away.

Good night, says Harry,—good night, says Mary;
Good night, says Dolly to John;
Good night, says Sue, to her sweetheart Hugh;
Good night says every one.
Some walk'd, and some did run;
Some loiter'd on the way,
And bound themselves by kisses twelve
To meet the next holiday.

KING HAL AND THE COBBLER.

From a Chap-book.

KING HAL was a-hunting the swift fallow-deer,
He dropped all his nobles; and when he got clear,
In hope of some pastime away he did ride,
Till he came to an alehouse, hard by a wood-side.

And there with a cobbler he happened to meet,
And him in kind sort he so freely did greet:
'Pray thee, good fellow, what hast in thy jug,
Which under thy arm thou dost lovingly hug?'

'By the mass!' quoth the cobbler, 'it's nappy brown ale,
And for to drink to thee, friend, I will not fail;
For although thy jacket looks gallant and fine,
I think that my twopence as good is as thine.'

'By my soul! honest fellow, the truth thou hast spoke,'
And straight he sat down with the cobbler to joke;
They drank to the King, and they pledged to each other;
Who'd seen 'em had thought they were brother and brother.

As they were a-drinking the King pleased to say,
'What news, honest fellow? come tell me, I pray?'
'There's nothing of news, beyond that I hear
The King's on the border a-chasing the deer.

'And truly I wish I so happy may be
Whilst he is a-hunting the King I might see;
For although I've travelled the land many ways
I never have yet seen a King in my days.'

The King, with a hearty brisk laughter, replied,
'I tell thee, good fellow, if thou canst but ride,
Thou shalt get up behind me, and I will thee bring
To the presence of Harry, thy sovereign King.'

'But he'll be surrounded with nobles so gay,
And how shall we tell him from them, sir, I pray?'
'Thou'lt easily ken him when once thou art there;
The King will be covered, his nobles all bare.'

He got up behind him and likewise his sack,
His budget of leather, and tools at his back;
They rode till they came to the merry greenwood,
His nobles came round him, bareheaded they stood.

The cobbler then seeing so many appear,
He slily did whisper the King in his ear:
Saying, 'They're all clothed so gloriously gay,
But which amongst them is the King, sir, I pray?'

The King did with hearty good laughter, reply,
By my soul! my good fellow, it's thou or it's I!
The rest are bareheaded, uncovered all round.'—
With his bag and his budget he fell to the ground,

Like one that was frightened quite out of his wits,
Then on his knees he instantly gets,
Beseeching for mercy; the King to him said,
Thou art a good fellow, so be not afraid.

'Come, tell thy name?' 'I am John of the Dale,
A cobbler of shoes and a lover of ale.'
'Rise up, Sir John, I will honour thee here,—
I make thee a knight of three thousand a year!'

This was a good thing for the cobbler indeed;
Then unto the court he was sent for with speed,
Where great store of pleasure and pastime was seen,
In the royal presence of King and of Queen.

Sir John of the Dale he has land, he has fee,
At the court of the king who so happy as he?
Yet still in his hall hangs the cobbler's old sack,
And the budget of tools which he bore at his back.

THE CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.

This, the most popular of all English Ballads, is taken from a copy printed in black letter in the Pepys collection.

OW ponder well, you parents deare,
These wordes which I shall write;
A doleful story you shall heare,
In time brought forth to light.
A gentleman of good account
In Norfolke dwelt of late,
Who did in honour far surmount
Most men of his estate.

Sore sicke he was, and like to dye,
No helpe his life could save;
His wife by him as sicke did lye,
And both possest one grave.
No love between these two was lost,
Each was to other kinde;
In love they liv'd, in love they dyed,
And left two babes behinde:

The one a fine and pretty boy,
Not passing three yeares olde;
The other a girl more young than he,
And fram'd in beautyes molde.
The father left his little son,
As plainlye doth appeare,
When he to perfect age should come,
Three hundred poundes a yeare.

And to his little daughter Jane
  Five hundred poundes in gold,
To be paid downe on marriage-day,
  Which might not be controll'd:
But if the children chance to dye,
  Ere they to age should come,
Their uncle should possesse their wealth;
  For so the wille did run.

"Now, brother," said the dying man,
  "Look to my children deare;
Be good unto my boy and girl,
  No friendes else have they here:
To God and you I recommend
  My children deare this daye;
But little while be sure we have
  Within this world to staye.

"You must be father and mother both,
  And uncle all in one;
God knowes what will become of them,
  When I am dead and gone."
With that bespake their mother deare,
  "O brother kinde," quoth shee,
"You are the man must bring our babes
  To wealth or miserie:

"And if you keep them carefully,
  Then God will you reward;
But if you otherwise should deal,
  God will your deedes regard."
With lippes as cold as any stone,
  They kist their children small:
"God bless you both, my children deare;"
  With that the teares did fall.

These speeches then their brother spake
To this sicke couple there:
"The keeping of your little ones,
Sweet sister, do not feare.
God never prosper me nor mine,
Nor aught else that I have,
If I do wrong your children deare,
When you are layd in grave."

The parents being dead and gone,
The children home he takes,
And bringes them straite unto his house,
Where much of them he makes.
He had not kept these pretty babes
A twelvemonth and a daye,
But, for their wealth, he did devise
To make them both awaye.

He bargain'd with two ruffians strong,
Which were of furious mood,
That they should take these children young,
And slaye them in a wood.
He told his wife an artful tale.
He would the children send
To be brought up in faire London,
With one that was his friend.

Away then went those pretty babes,
Rejoycing at that tide,
Rejoycing with a merry minde,
They should on cock-horse ride.
They prate and prattle pleasantly,
As they rode on the waye,
To those that should their butchers be,
And work their lives decaye:

So that the pretty speeche they had,
Made Murder's heart relent:
And they that undertooke the deed,
Full sore did now repent.

Yet one of them more hard of heart,
Did vowe to do his charge,
Because the wretch, that hired him,
Had paid him very large.

The other won't agree thereto,
So here they fall to strife;
With one another they did fight,
About the childrens life:
And he that was of mildest mood,
Did slaye the other there,
Within an unfrequented wood;
The babes did quake for feare!

He took the children by the hand,
Teares standing in their eye,
And bad them straitwaye follow him,
And look they did not crye:
And two long miles he ledd them on,
While they for food complaine:
"Staye here," quoth he, "I'll bring you bread,
When I come back againe."

These pretty babes, with hand in hand,
Went wandering up and downe;
But never more could see the man
Approaching from the towne:
Their prettye lippes with blackberries,
Were all besmear'd and dyed,
And when they sawe the darksome night,
They sat them downe and cryed.

Thus wandered these poor innocents,
Till deathe did end their grief,
In one anothers armes they died,
As wanting due relief:
No burial this pretty pair
Of any man receives,
Till Robin-red-breast piously
Did cover them with leaves.

And now the heavy wrathe of God
Upon their uncle fell;
Yea, fearfull fiends did haunt his house,
His conscience felt an hell;
His barnes were fir'd, his goodes consum'd,
His landes were barren made,
His cattle dyed within the field,
And nothing with him stayd.

And in the voyage of Portugal
Two of his sonnes did dye;
And to conclude, himselfe was brought
To want and miserye:
He pawn'd and mortgaged all his land
Ere seven yeares came about,
And now at length this wicked act
Did by this meanes come out:

The fellowe that did take in hand
These children for to kill,
Was for a robbery judg'd to dye,
Such was God's blessed will:
Who did confess the very truth,
As here hath been display'd:
Their uncle having dyed in gaol,
Where he for debt was layd.

You that executors be made,
And overseers eke
Of children that be fatherless,
And infants mild and meek;
Take you example by this thing,
And yield to each his right,
Lest God with such like miserye
Your wicked minds requite.

"Sing merrily we the hunt is up."

THE STAG-HUNT.

(*Written by Francis Douce.*)

THE hunt is up, the hunt is up!
Sing merrily we the hunt is up;
The birds they sing,
The deer they fling,
Hey, nonny, nony, no!
The hounds they cry,
The hunters fly,
Hey, trolilo, trololilo!
The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
Sing merrily we the hunt is up.

The wood resounds
To hear the sounds,
Hey, nonny, nony, no!
The rocks report
This merry sport,
Hey, trolilo, trololilo!
The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
Sing merrily we the hunt is up.

Then hie apace
Unto the chace,
Hey, nonny, nony, no!
While every thing
Doth sweetly sing,
Hey, trolilo, trololilo!
The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
Sing merrily we the hunt is up.

ROBIN GOODFELLOW.

(*From Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry."*)

ROM Oberon, in fairye land,
The king of ghosts and shadowes there,
Mad Robin I, at his command,
Am sent to viewe the night-sports here.
What revell rout
Is kept about,
In every corner where I go,
I will o'ersee,
And merry bee,
And make good sport, with ho, ho, ho!

More swift than lightening can I flye
About this aery welkin soone,
And, in a minute's space descrye
Each thing that's done belowe the moone.
There's not a hag,
Or ghost shall wag,
Or cry, ware Goblins! where I go;
But Robin I
Their feates will spy,
And send them home, with ho, ho, ho!

Whene'er such wanderers I meete,
As from their night-sports they trudge home;
With counterfeiting voice I greete
And call them on, with me to roame
Thro' woods, thro' lakes,
Thro' bogs, through brakes;
Or else, unseene, with them I go,
All in the nicke
To play some tricke,
And frolicke it, with ho, ho, ho!

Sometimes I meete them like a man;
Sometimes an ox, sometimes a hound;
And to a horse I turn me can;
To trip and trot about them round.
But if, to ride,
My backe they stride,
More swift than wind away I go,
Ore hedge and lands,
Thro' pools and ponds
I whirry, laughing, ho, ho, ho!

When lads and lasses merry be,
With possets and with juncates* fine;
Unseene of all the company,
I eat their cakes, and sip their wine;
And, to make sport,
I —— and snort;
And out the candles I do blow:
The maids I kiss;
They shrieke—Who's this?
I answer nought, but ho, ho, ho!

Yet now and then, the maids to please,
At midnight I card up their wooll;
And while they sleepe, and take their ease,
With wheel to threads their flax I pull.
I grind at mill
Their malt up still;
I dress their hemp, I spin their tow.
If any 'wake,
And would me take,
I wend me, laughing, ho, ho, ho!

When house or harth doth sluttish lye,
I pinch the maidens black and blue;
The bed-clothes from the bedd pull I,
And lay them naked all to view.

* Dainties.

'Twixt sleepe and wake,
I do them take,
And on the key-cold * floor them throw.
If out they cry,
Then forth I fly,
And loudly laugh out, ho, ho, ho!

When any need to borrowe ought,
We lend them what they do require:
And for the use demand we nought;
Our owne is all we do desire.
If to repay,
They do delay,
Abroad amongst them then I go,
And night by night,
I them affright
With pinchings, dreames, and ho, ho, ho!

When lazie queans have nought to do,
But study how to cog † and lye;
To make debate and mischief too,
'Twixt one another secretlye:
I marke their gloze,‡
And it disclose,
To them whom they have wrongèd so;
When I have done,
I get me gone,
And leave them scolding, ho, ho, ho!

When men do traps and engins set
In loop-holes where the vermine creepe,
Who from their foldes and houses get
Their duckes and geese, and lambes and sheepe:
I spy the gin,
And enter in,

* Very cold. † Cheat. ‡ Dissimulation.

And seeme a vermine taken so;
But when they there
Approach me neare,
I leap out laughing, ho, ho, ho!

By wells and rills, in meadowes greene,
We nightly dance our hey-day guise;
And to our fairye king and queene
We chant our moonlight minstrelsies.

When larks 'gin sing,
Away we fling;
And babes new borne steal as we go,
And elfe in bed
We leave instead,
And wend us laughing, ho, ho, ho!

From hag-bred Merlin's time have I
Thus nightly revell'd to and fro:
And for my pranks men call me by
The name of Robin Goodfellòw.
Fiends, ghosts, and sprites,
Who haunt the nightes,
The hags and goblins do me know;
And beldames old
My feates have told;
So, *Vale, Vale;* ho, ho, ho!

THE MILK-MAID'S LIFE.

(*From the Roxburgh Collection.*)

OU rural goddesses,
That woods and fields possess,
Assist me with your skill, that may direct my quill,
More jocundly to express,
The mirth and delight, both morning and night,
On mountain or in dale,
Of them who choose this trade to use,
And, through cold dews, do never refuse
To carry the milking-pail.

The bravest lasses gay,
Live not so merry as they;
In honest civil sort they make each other sport,
As they trudge on their way;
Come fair or foul weather, they're fearful of neither,
Their courages never quail.
In wet and dry, though winds be high,
And dark's the sky, they ne'er deny
To carry the milking-pail.

Their hearts are free from care,
They never will despair;
Whatever them befal, they bravely bear out all,
And fortune's frowns outdare.
They pleasantly sing to welcome the spring,
'Gainst heaven they never rail;
If grass well grow, their thanks they show,
And, frost or snow, they merrily go,
Along with the milking-pail.

"To carry the milking pail."

Base idleness they do scorn,
They rise very early i' th' morn,
And walk into the field, where pretty birds do yield
Brave music on every thorn.
The linnet and thrush do sing on each bush,
And the dulcet nightingale
Her note doth strain, by a jocund vein,
To entertain that worthy train,
Which carry the milking-pail.

Their labour doth health preserve,
No doctor's rules they observe,
While others too nice in taking their advice,
Look always as though they would starve.
Their meat is digested, they ne'er are molested,
No sickness doth them assail;
Their time is spent in merriment,
While limbs are lent, they are content,
To carry the milking-pail.

Upon the first of May,
With garlands, fresh and gay,
With mirth and music sweet, for such a season meet,
They pass the time away.
They dance away sorrow, and all the day through
Their legs do never fail,
For they nimbly their feet do ply,
And bravely try the victory,
In honour o' the milking-pail.

If any think that I
Do practise flattery,
In seeking thus to raise the merry milkmaids' praise,
I'll to them thus reply:—
It is their desert inviteth my art,
To study this pleasant tale;
In their defence, whose innocence,
And providence, gets honest pence
Out of the milking-pail.

HAPPINESS OF THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE.

(*Written by Phineas Fletcher.*)

HRICE, oh thrice happy, shepherd's life and state!
When courts are happiness' unhappy pawns!
His cottage low and safely humble gate
Shuts out proud Fortune with her scorns and fawns:
No feared treason breaks his quiet sleep,
Singing all day, his flocks he learns to keep;
Himself as innocent as are the innocent sheep.

No Syrian worms he knows, that with their thread
Draw out their silken lives: nor silken pride:
His lambs' warm fleece well fits his little need,
Not in that proud Sidonian tincture dyed:
No empty hopes, no courtly fears him fright;
Nor begging wants his middle fortune bite;
But sweet content exiles both misery and spite.

Instead of music, and base flattering tongues,
Which wait to first salute my lord's uprise;
The cheerful lark wakes him with early songs,
And birds' sweet whistling notes unlock his eyes:
In country plays is all the strife he uses;
Or sing, or dance unto the rural Muses;
And but in music's sports all difference refuses.

His certain life, that never can deceive him,
Is full of thousand sweets, and rich content:
The smooth-leaved beeches in the field receive him
With coolest shades, till noon-tide rage is spent;
His life is neither toss'd in boist'rous seas
Of troublous world, nor lost in slothful ease:
Pleas'd and full blest he lives, when he his God can please.

His bed of wool yields safe and quiet sleeps,
While by his side his faithful spouse hath place;
His little son into his bosom creeps,
The lively picture of his father's face:
Never his humble house nor state torment him:
Less he could like, if less his God had sent him;
And when he dies, green turfs, with grassy tomb, content
him.

LOVE WILL FIND OUT THE WAY.

From a black-letter copy, printed in Evan's Old Ballads.

FIRST PART.

VER the mountains,
And under the waves,
Over the fountains,
And under the graves,
Under floods which are deepest,
Which do Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way.

Where there is no place
For the glow-worm to lie,
Where there is no place
For the receipt of a fly,
Where the gnat dares not venture,
Lest herself fast she lay,
But if Love come he will enter,
And find out the way.

You may esteem him
A child of his force,
Or you may deem him
A coward, which is worse;
But if he whom Love doth honour,
Be concealed from the day,
Set a thousand guards upon him,
Love will find out the way.

Some think to lose him,
Which is too unkind,
And some do suppose him,
Poor heart, to be blind;
But if he were hidden,
Do the best you may,
Blind Love, if you so call him,
Will find out the way.

Well may the eagle
Stoop down to the fist,
Or you may inveigle
The Phœnix of the east;
With fear the tiger's moved,
To give over their prey,
But never stop a lover,
He will find out the way.

From Dover to Berwick,
And nations thereabout,
Brave Guy, Earl of Warwick,
That champion so stout,
With his warlike behaviour,
Through the world he did stray,
To win his Phillis' favour,
Love will find out the way.

In order next enters
Bevis so brave,
After adventures
And policy brave,
To see whom he desired,
His Josian so gay,
For whom his heart was fired,
Love will find out the way.

SECOND PART.

The Gordian knot,
Which true lovers knit,
Undo it you cannot,
Nor yet break it;

Make use of your inventions,
Their fancies to betray,
To frustrate their intentions,
Love will find out the way.

From court to the cottage,
In bower and in hall,
From the king unto the beggar
Love conquers all.
Though ne'er so stout and lordly,
Strive or do what you may,
Yet be you ne'er so hardy,
Love will find out the way.

Love hath power over princes,
And greatest emperors,
In any provinces,
Such is Love's power,
There is no resisting,
But him to obey;
In spite of all contesting,
Love will find out the way.

If that he were hidden,
And all men that are,
Were strictly forbidden
That place to declare;
Winds that have no abidings,
Pitying their delay,
Would come and bring him tidings,
And direct him the way.

If the earth should part him,
He would gallop it o'er;
If the seas should o'erthwart him,
He would swim to the shore.

Should his love become a swallow,
Through the air to stray,
Love will lend wings to follow,
And will find out the way.

There is no striving
To cross his intent,
There is no contriving
His plots to prevent;
But if once the message greet him,
That his true love doth stay,
If Death should come and meet him,
Love will find out the way.

THE HOCK-CART, OR HARVEST HOME.

Written by Robert Herrick.

OME, sons of summer, by whose toile
We are the lords of wine and oile,
By whose tough labours and rough hands,
We rip up first, then reap our lands.
Crown'd with the eares of corne, now come,
And to the pipe sing harvest home.
Come forth, my lord, and see the cart
Drest up with all the country art.
See here a Maukin, there a sheet,
As spotlesse pure as it is sweet:
The horses, mares, and frisking fillies,
Clad all in linnen white as lillies.
The harvest swaines and wenches bound
For joy, to see the Hock-cart crown'd.
About the cart, heare how the rout
Of rurall younglings raise the shout;
Pressing before, some coming after,
Those with a shout, and these with laughter.
Some blesse the cart, some kisse the sheaves,
Some prank them up with oaken leaves;
Some crosse the fill-horse; some with great
Devotion, stroak the home-borne wheat:
While other rusticks, lesse attent
To prayers then to merryment,
Run after with their breeches rent.
Well, on, brave boyes, to your lord's hearth,
Glitt'ring with fire; where, for your mirth,
Ye shall see first the large and cheefe
Foundation of your feast, fat beefe:

"Come forth, my Lord, and see the Cart."

With upper stories, mutton, veale,
And bacon, which makes full the meale,
With sev'rall dishes standing by,
As here a custard, there a pie,
And here all tempting frumentie.
And for to make the merry cheere,
If smirking wine be wanting here,
There's that which drowns all care, stout beere;
Which freely drink to your lord's health;
Then to the plough, the common-wealth;
Next to your flailes, your fanes, your fatts;
Then to the maids with wheaten hats:
To the rough sickle, and crookt sythe,
Drink, frollick boyes, till all be blythe.
Feed, and grow fat; and as ye eat,
Be mindfull that the lab'ring neat,
As you, may have their fill of meat.
And know, besides, ye must revoke
The patient oxe unto the yoke,
And all go back unto the plough
And harrow, though they're hanged up now.
And, you must know your lord's word's true,
Feed him ye must whose food fills you;
And that this pleasure is like raine,
Not sent ye for to drowne your paine,
But for to make it spring again.

HARVEST-HOME.

From an old broadside without printer's name or date.

COME, Roger and Nell,
Come, Simpkin and Bell,
Each lad with his lass hither come
With singing and dancing,
And pleasure advancing,
To celebrate harvest-home!

Chorus. 'Tis Ceres bids play,
And keep holiday,
To celebrate harvest-home!
Harvest-home!
Harvest-home!
To celebrate harvest-home!

Our labour is o'er,
Our barns, in full store,
Now swell with rich gifts of the land;
Let each man then take,
For the prong and the rake,
His can and his lass in his hand.
For Ceres, &c.

No courtier can be
So happy as we,
In innocence, pastime, and mirth;
While thus we carouse,
With our sweetheart or spouse,
And rejoice o'er the fruits of the earth.
For Ceres, &c.

LADY GREENSLEEVES.

From "A Handful of Pleasant Delites," printed in 1584.

REENSLEEVES was all my joy,
Greensleeves was my delight:
Greensleeves was my hart of gold,
And who but Lady Greensleeves.

Alas, my love, ye do me wrong,
To cast me off discourteously:
And I have lovèd you so long,
Delighting in your company!
Greensleeves, &c.

I have been ready at your hand,
To grant whatever you would crave;
I have both wagèd life and land,
Your love and good-will for to have.
Greensleeves, &c.

I brought three kerchers to thy head,
That were wrought fine and gallantly:
I kept them, both at board and bed,
Which cost my purse well-favour'dly.
Greensleeves, &c.

I bought thee petticoats of the best,
The cloth so fine as fine might be:
I gave thee jewels for thy chest;
And all this cost I spent on thee.
Greensleeves, &c.

Thy smock of silk both fair and white,
With gold embroidered gorgeously:
Thy petticoat of sendall* right;
And this I bought thee gladly.
Greensleeves, &c.

Thy girdle of gold so red,
With pearls bedeckèd sumptuously,
The like no other lasses had:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

Thy purse, and eke thy gay gilt knives,
Thy pin-case, gallant to the eye:
No better wore the burgess' wives:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

Thy crimson stockings, all of silk,
With gold all wrought above the knee;
Thy pumps, as white as was the milk:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

Thy gown was of a grassy green,
Thy sleeves of satin hanging by;
Which made thee be our harvest queen:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

Thy garters fringèd with the gold,
And silver aglets hanging by;
Which made thee blithe for to behold:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

* A thin silk.

"With gold embroidered gorgeously."

My gayest gelding I thee gave,
To ride wherever likèd thee;
No lady ever was so brave:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

My men were clothèd all in green,
And they did ever wait on thee;
All this was gallant to be seen:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

They set thee up, they took thee down,
They served thee with humility;
Thy foot might not once touch the ground:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

For every morning, when thou rose,
I sent thee dainties, orderly,
To cheer thy stomach from all woes:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

Thou couldst desire no earthly thing,
But still thou hadst it readily.
Thy music, still to play and sing:
And yet thou wouldst not love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

And who did pay for all this gear,
That thou didst spend when pleasèd thee?
Even I that am rejected here,
And thou disdainest to love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

Well! I will pray to God on high,
That thou my constancy mayst see,
And that, yet once before I die,
Thou wilt vouchsafe to love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

Greensleeves, now farewell! adieu!
God I pray to prosper thee!
For I am still thy lover true:
Come once again and love me!
Greensleeves, &c.

"I in these flowery meads would be."

THE ANGLER'S WISH.

By Izaak Walton.

IN these flowery meads would be;
These crystal streams should solace me;
To whose harmonious bubbling noise,
I with my angle would rejoice;
Sit here and see the turtle-dove
Court his chaste mate to acts of love;

Or on that bank feel the west wind
Breathe health and plenty: please my mind,
To see sweet dew-drops kiss these flowers,
And then wash'd off by April showers;
Here, hear my Kenna sing a song;
There, see a blackbird feed her young.

Or a laverock build her nest:
Here, give my weary spirits rest,
And raise my low-pitched thoughts above
Earth, or what poor mortals love:
Thus, free from law-suits and the noise
Of princes' courts, I would rejoice.

Or, with my Bryan and a book,
Loiter long days near Shawford brook;
There sit by him, and eat my meat,
There see the sun both rise and set,
There bid good morning to next day,
There meditate my time away,
And angle on; and beg to have
A quiet passage to a welcome grave.

CUMNOR HALL.

By W. J. Mickle.

THE dews of summer night did fall;
The moon, sweet regent of the sky,
Silver'd the walls of Cumnor Hall,
And many an oak that grew thereby.

Now nought was heard beneath the skies—
The sounds of busy life were still—
Save an unhappy lady's sighs,
That issued from that lonely pile.

"Leicester!" she cried, "is this thy love
That thou so oft hast sworn to me,
To leave me in this lonely grove,
Immur'd in shameful privity!

"No more thou com'st with lover's speed
  Thy once belovèd bride to see;
But be she 'live or be she dead,
  I fear, stern earl, 's the same to thee.

"Not so the usage I received
  When happy in my father's hall;
No faithless husband then me grieved,
  No chilling fears did me appal.

"I rose up with the cheerful morn,
  No lark more blithe, no flower more gay;
And like the bird that haunts the thorn,
  So merrily sung the livelong day.

"If that my beauty is but small,
  Amongst court-ladies all despised—
Why didst thou rend it from that hall,
  Where, scornful earl, it well was prized?

"And when you first to me made suit,
  How fair I was, you oft would say;
And, proud of conquest, plucked the fruit—
  Then left the blossom to decay.

"Yes, now neglected and despised,
  The rose is pale, the lily's dead;
But he that once their charms so prized
  Is, sure, the cause those charms are fled.

"For, know, when sick'ning grief doth prey,
  And tender love's repaid with scorn,
The sweetest beauty will decay—
  What floweret can endure the storm?

"At court, I'm told, is beauty's throne,
  Where every lady's passing rare;
That eastern flowers that shame the sun,
  Are not so glowing, not so fair:

"Then, earl, why didst thou leave the beds
Where roses and where lilies vie,
To seek a primrose, whose pale shades
Must sicken when those gaudes are by?

"'Mong rural beauties I was one;
Among the fields wild-flowers are fair:
Some country swain might me have won,
And thought my beauty passing rare.

"But, Leicester—or I much am wrong,
Or, 'tis not beauty lures thy vows;
Rather ambition's gilded crown
Makes thee forget thy humble spouse.

"Then, Leicester, why, again I plead
(The injured surely may repine),
Why didst thou wed a country-maid,
When some fair princess might be thine?

"Why didst thou praise my humble charms,
And, oh! then leave them to decay?
Why didst thou win me to thy arms,
Then leave me mourn the livelong day?

"The village maidens of the plain
Salute me lowly as I go;
Envious they mark my silken train,
Nor think a countess can have woe.

"The simple nymphs! they little know
How far more happy's their estate;
To smile for joy, than sigh for woe;
To be content than to be great.

"How far less blest am I than them,
Daily to pine and waste with care!
Like the poor plant, that from its stem
Divided feels the chilling air.

"Nor, cruel earl, can I enjoy
The humble charms of solitude;
Your minions proud my peace destroy,
By sullen frowns or prating rude.

"Last night, as sad I chanced to stray,
The village death-bell smote my ear:
They winked aside, and seemed to say,
'Countess, prepare; thy end is near!'

"And now, while happy peasants sleep,
Here I sit lonely and forlorn;
No one to soothe me as I weep,
Save Philomel on yonder thorn.

"My spirits flag, my hopes decay—
Still that dread death-bell smites my ear;
And many a boding seems to say,
"Countess, prepare; thy end is near!"'

Thus, sore and sad, that lady grieved
In Cumnor Hall, so lone and drear,
And many a heart-felt sigh she heaved,
And let fall many a bitter tear.

And ere the dawn of day appeared
In Cumnor Hall so lone and drear,
Full many a piercing scream was heard,
And many a cry of mortal fear.

The death-bell thrice was heard to ring;
An aerial voice was heard to call:
And thrice the raven flapped his wing
Around the towers of Cumnor Hall:

The mastiff howl'd at village-door;
The oaks were shattered on the green:
Woe was the hour,—for nevermore
That hapless countess e'er was seen,

And in that manor now no more
Is cheerful feast and sprightly ball;
For ever since that dreary hour
Have spirits haunted Cumnor Hall!

The village maids with fearful glance,
Avoid the ancient moss-grown wall,
Nor ever lead the merry dance
Among the groves of Cumnor Hall.

Full many a traveller oft hath sighed,
And pensive wept the countess' fall,
As, wand'ring onwards, he has spied
The haunted towers of Cumnor Hall.

ALCANZOR AND ZAYDA.

A Moorish Tale. Imitated from the Spanish.

SOFTLY blow the evening breezes,
Softly fall the dews of night;
Yonder walks the Moor Alcanzor,
Shunning every glare of light.

In yon palace lives fair Zayda,
Whom he loves with flame so pure;
Loveliest she of Moorish ladies;
He a young and noble Moor.

Waiting for the appointed minute,
Oft he paces to and fro;
Stopping now, now moving forwards,
Sometimes quick, and sometimes slow.

Hope and fear alternate teaze him,
Oft he sighs with heart-felt care:—
See, fond youth, to yonder window
Softly steps the timorous fair.

Lovely seems the moon's fair lustre
To the lost benighted swain,
When all silvery bright she rises,
Gilding mountain, grove, and plain.

Lovely seems the sun's full glory
To the fainting seaman's eyes,
When, some horrid storm dispersing,
O'er the wave his radiance flies.

But a thousand times more lovely
To her longing lover's sight
Steals half seen the beauteous maiden
Thro' the glimmerings of the night.

Tip-toe stands the anxious lover,
Whispering forth a gentle sigh:
"Alla* keep thee, lovely lady;
Tell me, am I doom'd to die?

"Is it true the dreadful story,
Which thy damsel tells my page,
That seduc'd by sordid riches
Thou wilt sell thy bloom to age?

"An old lord from Antiquera
Thy stern father brings along;
But canst thou, inconstant Zayda,
Thus consent my love to wrong?

* The Mahometan name of God;

"If 'tis true now plainly tell me,
Nor thus trifle with my woes;
Hide not then from me the secret,
Which the world so clearly knows."

Deeply sigh'd the conscious maiden,
While the pearly tears descend:
"Ah! my lord, too true the story;
Here our tender loves must end.

"Our fond friendship is discover'd,
Well are known our mutual vows:
All my friends are full of fury;
Storms of passion shake the house.

"Threats, reproaches, fears surround me;
My stern father breaks my heart:
Alla knows how dear it costs me,
Generous youth, from thee to part.

"Ancient wounds of hostile fury
Long have rent our house and thine;
Why then did thy shining merit
Win this tender heart of mine?

"Well thou know'st how dear I lov'd thee,
Spite of all their hateful pride,
Tho' I fear'd my haughty father
Ne'er would let me be thy bride.

"Well thou know'st what cruel chidings
Oft I've from my mother borne;
What I've suffered here to meet thee
Still at eve and early morn.

"I no longer may resist them;
All, to force my hand, combine;
And to-morrow to thy rival
This weak frame I must resign.

"Yet think not thy faithful Zayda
Can survive so great a wrong;
Well my breaking heart assures me
That my woes will not be long.

"Farewell then, my dear Alcanzor!
Farewell too my life with thee!
Take this scarf a parting token;
When thou wear'st it think on me.

"Soon, lov'd youth, some worthier maiden
Shall reward thy generous truth;
Sometimes tell her how thy Zayda
Died for thee in prime of youth."

To him all amaz'd, confounded,
Thus she did her woes impart:
Deep he sigh'd, then cry'd,—"O Zayda!
Do not, do not break my heart.

"Canst thou think I thus will lose thee?
Canst thou hold my love so small?
No! a thousand times I'll perish!—
My curst rival too shall fall.

"Canst thou, wilt thou yield thus to them?
O break forth, and fly to me!
This fond heart shall bleed to save thee,
These fond arms shall shelter thee."

"'Tis in vain, in vain, Alcanzor,
Spies surround me, bars secure:
Scarce I steal this last dear moment,
While my damsel keeps the door.

"Hark, I hear my father storming!
Hark, I hear my mother chide!
I must go: farewell for ever!
Gracious Alla be thy guide!"

SADDLE TO RAGS.

From "Ancient Poems, Ballads, and Songs of the Peasantry of England," published by the Percy Society.

HIS story I'm going to sing,
I hope it will give you content,
Concerning a silly old man
That was going to pay his rent

As he was a-riding along,
Along all on the highway,
A gentleman-thief overtook him,
And thus unto him did say.

"O well overtaken, old man,
O well overtaken," said he;
"Thank you kindly, sir," says the old man,
"If you be for my companie."

"How far are you going this way?"
It made the old man to smile;
"To tell you the truth, kind sir,
I'm just a-going twa mile.

"I am but a silly old man,
Who farms a piece of ground;
My half-year rent, kind sir,
Just comes to forty pound.

"But my landlord's not been at hame,—
I've not seen him twelve month or more;
It makes my rent to be large,
I've just to pay him fourscore."

"You should not have told any body,
For thieves there are ganging many;
If they were to light upon you,
They would rob you of every penny."

"O never mind," says the old man,
"Thieves I fear on no side;
My money is safe in my bags,
In the saddle on which I ride."

As they were a-riding along,
And riding a-down a ghyll,
The thief pulled out a pistòl,
And bade the old man stand still.

The old man was crafty and false,
As in this world are many;
He flung his old saddle o'er t' hedge,
And said, "Fetch it, if thou'lt have any."

This thief got off his horse,
With' courage stout and bold,
To search this old man's bags,
And gave him his horse to hold.

The old man put foot in stirrup,
And he got on astride,
He set the thief's horse in a gallop,—
You need not bid th' old man ride!

"O stay! O stay!" says the thief,
"And thou half my share shalt have:"
"Nay, marry, not I," quoth the old man,
"For once I've bitten a knave!"

This thief he was not content;
He thought these must be bags;
So he up with his rusty sword,
And chopped the old saddle to rags.

The old man gallop'd and rode
Until he was almost spent,
Till he came to his landlord's house,
And paid him his whole year's rent.

He opened this rogue's portmantle;
It was glorious for to behold;
There was five hundred pound in money,
And other five hundred in gold.

His landlord it made him to stare,
When he did the sight behold;
"Where did thou get the white money,
And where get the yellow gold?"

"I met a fond fool by the way,
I swapp'd horses, and gave him no boot;
But never mind," says the old man,
"I got a fond fool by the foot."

"But now you're grown cramped and old,
Nor fit for to travel about;"
"O never mind," says the old man,
"I can give these old bones a root!"

As he was a-riding hame,
And a-down a narrow lane,
He spied his mare tied to a tree,
And said, "Tib, thou'lt now gae hame."

And when that he got hame,
And told his old wife what he'd done,
She rose and she donned her clothes,
And about the house did run.

She sung, and she danced, and sung,
And she sung with a merry devotion,
"If ever our daughter gets wed,
It will help to enlarge her portion!"

HUNTING SONG.

Written by Sir Walter Scott.

AKEN, lords and ladies gay!
On the mountain dawns the day;
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting spear:
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling;
Merrily, merrily, mingle they—
"Waken, lords and ladies gay!"

Waken, lords and ladies gay!
The mist has left the mountain grey,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay—
"Waken, lords and ladies gay!"

Waken, lords and ladies gay!
To the green-wood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot, and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd;
You shall see him brought to bay—
"Waken, lords and ladies gay!"

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them, youth, and mirth, and glee,
Run a course as well as we;

Time, stern huntsman! who can baulk,
Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk?
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay!

MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Written by George Wither.

O, now is come our joyful'st feast;
Let ev'ry man be jolly:
Each room with ivy leaves is drest,
And every post with holly.
Though some churls at our mirth repine,
Round your foreheads garlands twine;
Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,
And let us all be merry.

Now all our neighbours' chimneys smoke,
And Christmas blocks are burning;
Their ovens they with baked meats choke,
And all their spits are turning.
Without the door let sorrow lie;
And if for cold it hap to die,
We'll bury 't in a Christmas pie,
And ever more be merry.

Now every lad is wondrous trim,
And no man minds his labour;
Our lasses have provided them
A bag-pipe and a tabour;
Young men and maids, and girls and boys,
Give life to one another's joys;
And you anon shall by their noise
Perceive that they are merry.

"Hark! how the roots with laughter sound!"

Rank misers now do sparing shun ;
  Their hall of music soundeth ;
And dogs thence with whole shoulders run,
  So all things there aboundeth.
The country folks themselves advance
With crowdy-muttons* out of France ;
And Jack shall pipe, and Jill shall dance,
  And all the town be merry.

Ned Squash hath fetch'd his bands from pawn,
  And all his best apparel ;
Brisk Nell hath bought a ruff of lawn
  With droppings of the barrel ;
And those that hardly all the year
Had bread to eat, or rags to wear,
Will have both clothes and dainty fare,
  And all the day be merry.

Now poor men to the justices
  With capons make their errants ;
And if they hap to fail of these,
  They plague them with their warrants,
But now they feed them with good cheer :
And what they want they take in beer ;
For Christmas comes but once a year,
  And then they shall be merry.

Good farmers in the country nurse
  The poor that else were undone ;
Some landlords spend their money worse,
  On lust and pride at London.
There the roysters they do play,
Drab and dice their lands away,
Which may be ours another day ;
  And therefore let's be merry.

* Fiddlers.

The client now his suit forbears,
The prisoner's heart is eased;
The debtor drinks away his cares,
And for the time is pleased.
Though other purses be more fat,
Why should we pine or grieve at that?
Hang sorrow! care will kill a cat,
And therefore let's be merry.

Hark! how the wags abroad do call
Each other forth to rambling:
Anon you'll see them in the hall
For nuts and apples scrambling.
Hark! how the roofs with laughter sound!
Anon they'll think the house goes round;
For they the cellar's depth have found,
And there they will be merry.

The wenches with their wassail bowls
About the streets are singing;
The boys are come to catch the owls,
The wild mare in is bringing.
Our kitchen-boy hath broke his box,
And to the dealing of the ox
Our honest neighbours come by flocks,
And here they will be merry.

Now kings and queens poor sheep cotes have,
And mate with every body;
The honest now may play the knave,
And wise men play the noddy.
Some youths will now a mumming go,
Some others play at Rowland-ho,
And twenty other gambles mo,
Because they will be merry.

Then wherefore in these merry days
  Should we, I pray, be duller?
No, let us sing some roundelays,
  To make our mirth the fuller.
And, whilst thus inspired we sing,
Let all the streets with echoes ring,
Woods and hills, and every thing,
  Bear witness we are merry.

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